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THE

MODERN TRAVELLER.

VOLUME THE TWENTY-SIXTH.

MEXICO AND GUATIMALA.

VOL. II.

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THE

MODERN TRAVELLER.

A

DESCRIPTION,

GEOGRAPHICAL, HISTORICAL, AND TOPOGRAPHICAL,

OF THE

VARIOUS COUNTRIES OF THE GLOBE.

IN THIRTY VOLUMES.

By JOSIAH CONDER.

VOLUME THE TWENTY-SIXTH.

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CONTENTS

OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

MEXICO.

	PAGE
GUANAXUATO	1
FROM GUANAXUATO TO ALTAMIRA	17
SAN LUIS POTOSI	18
INTERIOR EASTERN PROVINCES	23
SAN BLAS	34
TEPIC	42
GUADALAXARA	50
ZACATECAS	54
DURANGO	55
SONORA	64
NEW MEXICO	71
NEW CALIFORNIA	88
OLD CALIFORNIA	97
FROM SANTA FE TO NATCHITOCHES	101
VALLADOLID	118
VOLCANO OF JORULLO	121
OAXACA	127
RUINS AT MITLA	130
TEHUANTEPEC	134
MERIDA, OR YUCATAN	147
CHIAPA	152
RUINS OF PALENQUE	157
CONCLUSION	169

GUATIMALA.

PAGE
BOUNDARIES 177
STATE OF THE COUNTRY PRIOR TO THE CONQUEST 178
TERRITORIAL LIMITS AND PROVINCIAL DIVISIONS 191
MOSQUITO SHORE 194
PROVINCES ON THE COAST OF THE PACIFIC 197
VALLEY OF GUATIMALA 215
OLD GUATIMALA 222
NEW GUATIMALA 238
VOLCANOES OF GUATIMALA 247
PROVINCE OF SOLOLA 256
PROVINCES OF QUEZALTENANGO AND TOTONICAPAN 261
PROVINCES ON THE ATLANTIC COAST 273
INTENDANCY OF NICARAGUA 301
PROJECTED SHIP CANAL FOR UNITING THE TWO OCEANS 303
PROVINCE OF COSTA RICA 312
CONCLUSION 318

DIRECTIONS FOR PLACING THE PLATES.

VOL. I. *MAP of MEXICO* ..... *to face the Title.*
PYRAMID of CHOLULA 254
The GREAT SQUARE at MEXICO 268
BASALTIC ROCKS at REGLA 356
VOL. II. *SUBURBS of GUANAXUATO...to face the Title.*
INDIANS of MECHOACAN 119
VOLCANO of JORULLO 121

THE

MODERN TRAVELLER,

ETC. ETC.

MEXICO.

GUANAXUATO.

The city of Santa Fe de Guanaxuato (or, as it is sometimes written and pronounced, Gonnajoato) is the *Villa Rica* of Mexico, being placed in the very heart of its richest groupe of silver mines, on the porphyritic range of the *Sierra de Santa Rosa.** It is one of the most singularly situated cities in the world. One might imagine that the jealous spirit of the mine had chosen this labyrinth of mountain ravines as his capital, for the purpose at once of security and concealment; and the extraordinary shapes assumed by the gigantic masses of porphyry, have frequently the appearance of ruined walls and bastions. These rocks give to the environs an extremely romantic appearance. The hills which surround the city are partly arid, partly covered with shrubs and evergreen oaks, which greatly heighten the picturesque effect. The city itself is entirely screened from view by the windings of the narrow defile which leads into the recesses of the mountain; and when the traveller at

* Humboldt gives the latitude 21° 0′ 9″ N.; long. 100° W.

length finds himself introduced into the city, he has no idea of its extent, one part being so hidden from another, that, viewed from the streets, it appears to be a small town. It is only by ascending the heights on the opposite side, that a view is gained of the whole valley, broken into ravines, along the sides of which the town is built. Surveyed from this point, the novelty of its situation strikes the stranger with astonishment. In some places, it is seen spreading out into the form of an amphitheatre; in others, stretching along a narrow ridge; while the ranges of the habitations, accommodated to the broken ground, present the most fantastic groupes.

"Nothing can be more ruinous and gloomy," says the Author of Notes on Mexico, "than the approach to the city; but, on leaving the bed of the river, we ascended a steep projecting rock, and entered a street, skirting a ravine, supported by a lofty stone wall, having houses on only one side of it. We soon found ourselves in the heart of the town, winding along crooked, narrow streets, and across open spaces, which cannot be called squares, for they are irregular and of indescribable forms, most of them filled with market-stalls. The houses present a very singular appearance. They are spacious and well built, of hewn stone, but the fronts have been newly painted, and of the gayest colours: light green is the favourite; and some exhibit the colours of the Three Guarantees of the Plan of Iguala,—white, green, and red, which are now the national colours of Mexico.* We were conducted to the custom-house, where we had only to make a declaration that we had not more than one thousand dollars with us, and were

* This was in the year 1822, during the reign of Iturbidé.

suffered to proceed to the *mesón*. A traveller is allowed to carry with him a sum not exceeding a thousand dollars, without paying duty. Our *mesón* is very comfortable. We have two rooms up stairs, that look on the street, with a table and a bench in each. Our mattresses are on the floor, but then it is paved, and the white-washed walls are almost clean."

The city of Guanaxuato was founded by the Spaniards in 1545. It was constituted a town in 1619, and invested with the privileges of a city in 1741. The first mine that was worked, that of San Barnabe, five leagues from the city, was begun in 1548, twenty-eight years after the death of Montezuma. In 1758, the mines of *Meblado* and *Rayas* were opened on the great vein (*veta madre*). But, for a considerable time, the mines of Guanaxuato attracted little notice, and they were almost abandoned during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is not above fifty years that they have become so famous. They are now esteemed richer than those of either Pachuca, Zacatecas, or Bolaños; and their produce has been almost double that of Potosi. In thirty-eight years, namely, from 1766 to 1803, the mines of Guanaxuato produced gold and silver to the value of 165,000,000 of piastres, or 12,720,061 lb. troy; the annual average produce being 556,000 marcs of silver, or 364,911 lb. troy, and from 1,500 to 1,600 marcs of gold.* All the veins of Hungary and Transylvania together yield only, on an average, 85,000 marcs of silver.† The mother vein

* Humboldt states, that the *veta madre* of Guanaxuato has yielded more than a fourth part of the silver of Mexico, and a sixth part of the produce of all America.

† But, although the quantity of silver annually extracted from the mines of Mexico, is ten times greater than what is furnished

(*veta madre*) of the Sierra de Santa Rosa extends, in a direction from S.E. to N.W., rather more than five leagues; and within this distance, from Valenciana to San Bruno, there are upwards of a hundred shafts opened, which, before the Revolution, were yielding 10,000 mule-loads of ore, of eleven *arrobas* (275 lb.) each, every week. In 1803, there were employed on the works, 5000 workmen, 1,896 grinding mills, and 14,618 mules. "The *Valenciana*," says Humboldt, "is almost the sole example of a mine which, for forty years, has never yielded less to its proprietors than from two to three millions of francs annual profit (from 80 to 120,000*l*.). It appears that the part of the vein extending from Tepeyac to the north-west, had not been much wrought towards the end of the sixteenth century. From that period, the whole tract remained forsaken till 1760, when a Spaniard who went over to America very young, began to work this vein in one of the points which had till that time been believed to be destitute of the metals. M. Obregon (that was the name of this Spaniard) was without fortune; but, as he had the reputation of being a worthy man, he found friends who from time to time advanced him small sums to carry on his operations. In 1766, the works were already 260 feet in depth, and yet, the expenses greatly surpassed the value of the metallic produce. With a passion for mining, equal to what some display for gaming, M. Obregon preferred submitting to every sort of privation, to

by all the mines of Europe, gold is not much more abundant in New Spain than in Hungary and Transylvania. The latter countries, Humboldt says, annually throw into circulation nearly 5,200 marcs; and the gold delivered into the mint of Mexico, amounts, in ordinary years, only to 7,000 marcs. The annual produce of New Spain is estimated by Humboldt at 23,000,000 of piastres, viz. twenty-two of silver and one of gold.

abandoning his undertaking. In 1767, he entered into partnership with a petty merchant of Rayas, named Otero. Could he then hope that, in the space of a few years, he and his friend would become the richest individuals in Mexico, perhaps in the whole world? In 1768, they began to extract a very considerable quantity of silver from the mine of Valenciana. In proportion as the shafts went deeper, they approached the depository of the great metallic wealth of Guanaxuato. In 1771, they drew from the *pertinencia de dolores* enormous masses of sulphuret of silver, mixed with native and red silver. From that period till 1804, the mine of Valenciana has continually yielded an annual produce of nearly 600,000*l.* sterling. There have been years so productive, that the net profit of the two proprietors of the mine has amounted to the sum of 250,000*l.* sterling. M. Obregon, better known by his title of Count de la Valenciana, preserved, in the midst of immense wealth, the same simplicity of manners and the same frankness of character, by which he was distinguished previously to his success.* When he began to work the vein of Guanaxuato, above the ravine of San Xavier, goats were feeding on the very hill which, ten years afterwards, was covered with a town of 7 or 8,000 inhabitants." †

Throughout Mexico, the ore is poor, much more so

* During the last twenty-five years of his life, his annual revenue from his mine, was never below from 80 to 125,000*l.*, and yet, at his death, he left behind him only 400,000*l.* in property, exclusive of his mine; a fact which, Humboldt says, will not surprise persons who are acquainted with the interior management of the great Mexican families, and the unbounded spirit of mining speculation.

† Pol. Essay, vol. iii. pp. 193—5.

than in the mines of Europe. The average proportion is not higher than three or four ounces of silver to 1,600 ounces of ore. Garces, the author of a valuable treatise on Amalgamation, states, that "the great mass of Mexican ore is so poor, that the three millions of marcs of silver which the kingdom yields in good years, are extracted from ten millions of quintals of ore, partly by heat, and partly by amalgamation." The mine of Valenciana at Guanaxuato, yielded, from January 1, 1787, to June 11, 1791, the sum of 1,737,052 marcs of silver, which were extracted from 84,368 *montones* of ore. A *monton* is thirty-two quintals, which gives five ounces and one-tenth of silver per quintal. The ore extracted in 1791 yielded nine ounces and three-tenths of silver per quintal; viz. the quintal of rich ore (*polvillos y xabones*), 22 marcs 3 ounces; the second quality (*apolvillado*), 9 marcs 3 ounces; the third quality (*blanco bueno*), 3 marcs 1 ounce, and the poor ore and siftings, 3 ounces. The expenses of working the mines are very considerable. Those of the mine of Valenciana, at the time that the produce amounted to from 12 to 14 millions of dollars, were upwards of 900,000 dollars, viz. 680,000 in wages, and 220,000 for powder, tallow, wood, leather, steel, and other materials.* At that time, there were 1800 men employed

* In 1803, the mine of Valenciana produced 27,000 dollars per week; 3,100 individuals were employed; and the weekly expenses were 17,000 dollars. In nine years, this mine yielded 13,835,380 dollars, and the expenses of extraction were 8,046,063 dollars, leaving a gross profit of 5,789,317 dollars, subject to the duty, seignorage, &c. "When we take into calculation," says the American Traveller, "the costly works at these mines, the expensive process of separating the precious metals from the ore, the high wages of all the *employés*, from the *administrador* to the common labourer, the tax of 10 *per cent* paid to the government, and the

in the interior of the mine, besides 300 men, women, and children, in different ways. Almost all the ore is brought up by porters. The state of these mines, indeed, says the Author of Notes on Mexico, is deplorable. "The expenses of working them have already been prodigiously augmented by the depth of the shafts and the prolongation of the galleries; and it will require a large capital to establish forcing pumps to extract the water. In many instances, *it will be impossible to employ steam as the moving power, from the great scarcity of fuel.*"

According to Humboldt, the population of Guanaxuato in 1802 was, within the city, 41,000; in the suburbs and mines surrounding it, 29,600: total, 70,600. But, from a census taken in May 1822, the inhabitants of the city appear to be now only 15,379, and the total population only 35,733;* being a diminution of nearly one half. The town or suburb of Valenciana alone formerly contained a population of 22,000 souls; it is now in ruins, and there are not more than 4,000 inhabitants. The American Traveller gives the following account of the works as they appeared at the period of his visit.

"The excavations extend from south-east to north-west, sixteen hundred yards, and eight hundred yards

very expensive works undertaken on the slightest indication of silver ore, and which are frequently pursued with great ardour to the utter ruin of the undertakers, — we shall find that the whole profits of mining in New Spain, do not exceed 6 *per cent* on the capital employed." A decree of the junta of the 13th Feb., 1822, reduced the tenth to 3 *per cent*, and the treasurer (Don Francisco Arillaga), in his report made to Congress in Nov. 1823, intimates his expectation of great results *from the introduction of steam-engines by foreign capitalists*. It remains to be seen how far these expectations will be realised.

* Of these, the males were 16,425, the females 19,308. There were unmarried, 20,244; married, 11,962; widowed and widowers, 3,527.

in a south-west direction. There are three parallels, or plains, worked on ramifications of the principal vein. The *veta madre*, or mother vein, was here found not more than twenty-two feet wide, and without any ramification, from the surface of the soil to the depth of 557 feet: at this depth, it divides into three branches, the entire mass being from 165 to 195 feet thick. Of these three branches, not more than one is in general very productive. They have all the same angle (45°), but vary in thickness from nine to forty yards. Four shafts descend to these parallels. The first, called San Antonio, is of 744 feet perpendicular depth: the cost of this shaft was 396,000 dollars. The square shaft of Santo Christo, 492 feet deep, cost 95,000 dollars. The hexagon shaft of our Lady of Guadeloupe, 1,131 feet perpendicular depth, cost 700,000 dollars. San Josè, an octagon shaft of more than 1,800 feet perpendicular depth, and 300 feet in the direction of the *veta madre*, which is an angle of 45°, cost 1,200,000 dollars.

" To understand the necessity of sinking so many shafts of different depths, it may be necessary to explain, that in following the dip of the vein, which is first discovered on the surface, and is almost invariably an angle of 45°, the work is impeded after a certain depth by water. A shaft is then sunk, so as to intercept the vein at the termination of the gallery, in order to free the mine from water. The work is then continued until it becomes necessary to sink another shaft still deeper, to clear the lower galleries. At the termination of each shaft, a great many parallel galleries branch out on ramifications of the mother vein.

" From these parallels a vast number of smaller

galleries branch out, worked to a greater or less distance as the ore proved to be of good or bad quality; and many of them were pierced with a view of discovering other veins. Besides the shafts, there are two descents by steps, winding down to the last parallel. On leaving the house of the administrador, we were conducted to the first flight of steps: preceded by four men carrying torches, we descended to the first parallel, and stopped where four galleries branch off.

"Our torch-bearers were sent off to the extremity of these galleries, that we might form some idea of their extent in a straight line. They are both extensive and solid; the vaults are of porphyry, and the bottom of gray slate. In some places where the ore proved very rich, it has been taken from the sides and vaults, and the voids filled up with masonry and beams, worked in so as to form a firm support to the sides and roof. These galleries have been blasted out, and must have cost great labour, for the whole mountain is of porphyry to a great depth.

"The exterior is covered with a crust of brescia, which extends not more than four or five feet from the surface. The ore is for the most part extracted by drilling and blasting: sometimes, but very rarely, the wedge can be used. On our return, we plodded painfully up these stairs, which the *cargadores* (porters) ascend with ease, with a load of ten or fifteen arrobas on their shoulders. They are paid according to the quantity they bring up; and some of these men will ascend, as we are told, from the perpendicular depth of 500 yards, carrying the enormous weight of twenty-four arrobas (600lbs.). In the court-yard into which we entered from the gallery, and where the workmen are searched, there was a large

heap of ore, accumulated by each workman being obliged to bring a stone up in his hand every time he ascends, and throw it on this heap. There are about 1,000 workmen at present employed, and in the course of a week a large pile is formed. The product of this belongs to the mine, and forms a fund for contingent expenses. The matrices of these ores, which we had here a good opportunity of examining, are principally quartz, amethyst, and rock-crystal, hornstone here and there, and a small portion of calcareous spar of a dark brown and of pearl colour. The metals are, pyrites of iron, arsenic, yellow copper, galena, gray and yellow blende, virgin gold and silver, sulphate of silver, both brittle and ductile, and *rosicler*, a rich silver ore of a bright rosy colour, which we did not see. This ore is so rare, that I could not meet with a specimen during my residence in Mexico. There are likewise veins with copper, lead, tin, cinnabar, antimony, and manganese; and the crystals of the carbonate of lime that are found in this mine, are very large and perfect.

"We next visited the principal shaft, San Josè, an octagon, the diameter eleven yards, and the perpendicular depth 600. This great work, which cost upwards of a million of dollars, is in some places blasted through solid rock, and in others walled up with hewn stone: the masonry is admirably well executed. The workmen threw bundles of lighted hay down the shaft, which blazed as they descended, and which we saw fall into the water, now not more than 250 yards from the summit, and rising every day. After failing in his attack on the city of Guanaxuato, Mina caused the machinery of the mine of Valenciana to be burnt, and the owners have not funds to renew it.

"From these mines we went to a shaft called Guade-

loupe where we found two malacates in operation, These machines are used to free mines from water, and to draw up the ore. A malacate is a drum of about ten feet in diameter, attached to a vertical spindle, a shaft of fifteen feet long, which is shod with steel, and turns in steel sockets. Poles project at right angles from the shaft, to which the horses are harnessed. Two ropes are passed round the drum, and over pulleys supported by poles twelve feet high and about ten feet apart, leading to the well. As the drum turns, one rope descends, and the other is wound up, and raises a large skin full of ore, or buckets of water, by what the French call a *chapelet*. At the principal or octagonal shaft, eight malacates were kept constantly at work, night and day. Each malacate was moved by twelve horses, and drew up, by a succession of buckets, seventy-eight arrobas (975 quarts) every nine or ten minutes: 95,000 arrobas, or 31,800 cubic feet of water, might be raised by this means every twenty-four hours. It happened to be a sale day, and in the same court where the malacates were at work, we saw three or four hundred people collected; some exposing the ore to the best advantage, and others examining its quality. This mine is now worked by halves, the workmen receiving one half of the profits, and the owners of the mine the other. The workmen were busily employed in arranging the pieces of ore in parallelograms, composed of small circular heaps of ore. They were very careful to place the richest pieces at top, and the fairest side in sight. When all was prepared, the salesman placed himself at the head of the first parallelogram; and the buyers, after examining the quality of the ore, whispered in his ear the price they were willing to give for it. When all had made their

offers, he declared aloud the highest bid and the name of the purchaser. A note was made of the sale, and the whole party moved to the next parcel of ore, and so on, until the whole was disposed of.

"There are two sale days in the week, Wednesday and Saturday; and the weekly sales amount to between 5 and 6,000 dollars."

On the following day, our Traveller set out to visit a *hacienda de plata*, belonging to the Conde de Valenciana, in the Cañada de Marfil. "It is a spacious building, divided into three large courts; one for preparing the ores (*patio pa. beneficiar*), and the others for horses and mules. The front is two stories high, very neatly built, and forms an excellent dwelling-house. From the house, we walked through the first court, where men and mules were treading out masses of mud, and entered a long range of buildings, where there were thirty-five mills at work grinding the ore.

"This hacienda, in prosperous times, works seventy mills. They resemble bark-mills. A circle of about eleven feet in diameter, is paved with stones set up edgeways, and rubbed down to a smooth surface; in the centre of the circle an upright shaft moves in sockets. From this an axle projects, and passes through the centre of a millstone that rolls on its periphery: to the end of this axle the traces of the mules that turn it are attached. The first process is, separating the ore from the stones and refuse. Women are employed in this work. They throw aside the stones that have no ore, and with a hammer chip off small pieces of ore from those that have a little only on the surface. They perform this operation with great skill and great despatch. The ore is then placed on a thick iron plate, and is pounded by wooden pestles shod with iron, and moved by a horizontal shaft furnished with

arms, like the movement of the pestles in our rice-mills. Two men, stationed one on each side, draw the ore from under the pestles upon plates that slope down from the top, and are perforated with holes so as to sift the ore as it falls on them. The large pieces are thrown back under the pestles.

"After the ore is broken into very small pieces, it is put into the mill, mixed with water, and ground to an impalpable powder. A small quantity of quicksilver is sometimes mixed with this mass while in the mill. From the mills, the ore, ground to a powder and moistened, is conveyed to the *patio pa. beneficiar*, the open paved court-yard; salt is then added in the proportion of about two pounds to every hundred weight of ore. If the mass, which is left untouched for several days, heats too rapidly, lime is added, which, the superintendant told us, cools it: if, on the contrary, it continues cold, *magistral* is mixed with it, in order to give it the proper temperature. The *magistral* is a copper ore, or more properly a mixture of pyrites of copper and sulphuretted iron, which is roasted in a furnace, cooled gradually, and then reduced to a powder; a small quantity of salt is afterwards mixed with it. A small quantity of the powdered magistral was put into my hand, and water poured upon it. The heat evolved was so great, that I was obliged to throw it away instantly; probably owing to the sulphuric acid acting upon the metals and disengaging heat.

"The next operation is, to add quicksilver to the mass, commonly six times the quantity which it is supposed the mass contains of silver. This mixture of ore, ground to a fine powder and moistened, of quicksilver, muriate of soda, and the sulphates of iron and copper, is made into an amalgam by being trodden by mules,

which are driven round for hours together; or by men, who tread the mass with naked feet. We saw both in one mass; twelve mules were trotting round up to their fetlocks in the mixture; and in another, ten men were following each other, and treading up to their ankles in it. The superintendant examines the appearance of the amalgam from time to time, by taking up a little of it in a wooden bowl, and adds either salt, quicksilver, or magistral, as he finds necessary to complete the amalgamation.

"This process is repeated every other day until a perfect amalgam is made, when it is conveyed into large vats filled with water. In the centre of the vat there is an upright shaft, furnished with arms and turned by mules, so as to stir up the ore and mix it well with the water. It is left to subside, and the water is let off gently, carrying with it a portion of earth, and leaving the amalgam, which is precipitated: this process is repeated until the amalgamation is freed from all extraneous matter. It is then moulded into triangles, which are placed under stout iron recipients of a bell shape, and the mercury is separated by heat, leaving the silver with a small portion of copper, not enough for the usual alloy.

"One of the grinding-mills, in which quicksilver had been added to the mass, was emptied and cleaned in my presence, in order to get out the amalgam, which is precipitated, and lodges in the interstices of the stones with which these mills are paved. After the floating mass was removed, the stones were scraped, and the crevices emptied. The contents were put into a wooden bowl and washed. This amalgam, besides silver, contains a large portion of gold. The ore of the mine of Valenciana contains some gold, which unites with the quicksilver, and this amalgam,

being so much heavier, is more quickly precipitated. The bars of silver made from these cleanings, contain always the largest portion of gold, and are kept apart."

The *Sierra* of *Santa Rosa* is the most southern district of that metalliferous tract of country which is by far the richest in Mexico, and abounds more in silver than any other on the face of the globe. This central groupe, extending from lat. 21° 0′ to 24° 10′ N., and from long. 102° 30′ to 105° 15′ W., is situated under the same parallel as Bengal, but in a climate partaking more of the character of the temperate, than of the tropical zone. The mines of Guanaxuato are only 30 leagues distant in a straight line from those of San Luis Potosi: from the latter to Zacatecas, the distance is 34 leagues; from Zacatecas to Catorce 31; and from Catorce to Durango 74 leagues. The mean produce of the mines of New Spain, annually exported from Vera Cruz, is stated to have been two millions and a half of marcs of silver, being two thirds of the silver annually extracted from the whole globe. Of this 2,500,000, not less than 1,300,000 was yielded by Guanaxuato, Catorce, and Zacatecas, or the "central" groupe.

Guanaxuato, however, is not only a mining, but an agricultural district. "The lands are fertile, and are cultivated to the base of the mountains; and the morals of the inhabitants of the country, who are frugal and industrious, form a strong contrast to those of the miners, who, when the mines were in successful operation, were all wealthy, and lived extravagantly, and many of whom are now in abject poverty."

The inhabitants of the city appeared to this Traveller lively, intelligent, and well-informed: he found them extremely hospitable and friendly. In common,

however, with the inhabitants of most mining districts, they are passionately fond of gambling. The commandant of the city was, moreover, a great amateur of cock-fighting; and our Traveller was not a little annoyed, early in the morning, by the continual crowing of more than a hundred cocks, the property of this worthy person, which, tied by one leg, were arranged along the pavement on both sides of the street: they were to be exhibited at the ensuing Christmas. "In all the towns and villages of Mexico," he says, "cock-fighting is the favourite diversion of the people. Rich and poor, men and women, frequent the pits, and stake sometimes all they are worth on the issue of a battle between two cocks armed with slashers."

Guanaxuato is liable to two serious inconveniences from its peculiarity of situation. During the rainy season, it is exposed to injury from the violent torrents that rush from the mountains down the *barranca*, or ravine, in which the city stands, in their passage to the plain of Celaya. Large sums have been expended on works to restrain these torrents within a channel, notwithstanding which, accidents happen almost every year. On the other hand, the only water in the city, is that which is contained in the cisterns belonging to the wealthy inhabitants. About two miles from the town, however, there are deep ravines, which, by means of dams, are made to serve as reservoirs: the water is brought into the city on the backs of asses, and sold at six cents a load.

We must now accompany the American Citizen on his route

FROM GUANAXUATO TO SAN LUIS POTOSI AND ALTAMIRA.

At Guanaxuato our Traveller dismissed his carriage, and procured mules for the passage over the mountains. The steep track which winds along the ravines from Valenciana, is so broken and precipitous, that goats, mules, and asses only can travel it with safety. The sides of the mountains and ravines are covered with a thick growth of small oaks, and the city is supplied with fuel from these woods; but the want of good roads renders it an expensive article, notwithstanding the extensive forests in the neighbourhood. The bare summits of the hills are washed into fantastic shapes, and the character of the scenery is very wild and picturesque. The road for three hours leads over this rugged solitude, till, having reached the crest of the *sierra*, the traveller looks down on the fertile valley of San Felipe, enclosed on every side, like the basin of Anahuac, by a wall of mountains. At its further extremity is seen the town of San Felipe. "With this prospect constantly in view," says the Writer, "we rode for nearly five hours along the summit of the ridge, and then descended by a winding and steep path, to the village of Rincon, where we arrived quite overcome with fatigue. We obtained lodgings, with some difficulty, in a room attached to a cottage. The inhabitants of Rincon are goatherds and swineherds; and at sunset, the village was alive with the flocks and droves coming in from the mountains."

Second day.—From Rincon to Xaral. The Author set out at two o'clock in the morning, by a bright moonlight: the cold was piercing. At sunrise, the

houses and churches of San Felipe appeared as if rising out of a lake, the effect of a *mirage*. This town exhibited a melancholy instance of the horrors of civil war. Scarcely a house was entire, and except one church that had been recently rebuilt, the whole town appeared to be in ruins. The travellers halted in the principal square, and passed through arches of porphyry, into the court-yard of a building that had once been magnificent, but the porticoes and ground-floor alone remained. Soon after leaving San Felipe, the road again begins to ascend the mountains by a steep and rugged pass, called *Puerto de San Bartolo*. On gaining the summit, "a painful ascent of more than an hour," another extensive and fertile plain is seen, in the centre of which is the village or *hacienda* of Xaral, where the travellers arrived a little before four P.M. This is the place which was surprised and plundered by the troops of Mina in the revolutionary war.*

Third day.—Starting at three o'clock, the Author reached at ten, the *hacienda de la Pila*, a very neat village, where there are silver-works. An hour's ride from this place brought him within sight of the spires of San Luis, and at one he passed the suburbs.

SAN LUIS POTOSI.

"THE whole country from La Pila to San Luis, is cultivated like a garden; but its beauty is destroyed by mud-cabins and enclosures of *cactus*. The town itself presents a fine appearance: the churches are lofty, and some of them very handsome, and the houses are of stone and neatly built. The government-

* See vol. i. p. 121.

house in the square is not yet completed; but the front, which is of hewn stone, and ornamented with Ionic pilasters, would do credit to any city in Europe." The Carmelite convent is spacious and commodious, with an extensive garden, which is cultivated with great care, and kept in excellent order: the walks are shaded with vines, and the cloisters are ornamented with orange and lemon-trees. The windows of the convent command a beautiful prospect of the fertile plain, terminated by a bold outline of mountains. The church belonging to it is all tinsel and gilding, and in wretched taste. The people of San Luis appeared "better dressed and better looking" than in any town which the Author had yet passed through, and there were fewer beggars in its streets. Humboldt states the resident population at 12,000. The American Traveller estimates it at 15,000, and adds, that, including all the villages in its immediate vicinity, it amounts to three times that number. It stands in lat. 22° N., long. 103° W.*

For three hours after leaving the city of San Luis, the road lies eastward through a country but partially cultivated, and overgrown with *cactus* and *yucca arborescens*, which give a gloomy appearance to the scenery. The fruit of the cactus (*tuna*) is here considered as a great delicacy; cattle are fed upon the leaves, and the stem, which is about ten feet high, is used for fuel. The soil of this tract is a "whitish clay;"† and when pulverised by the passage of mules, the dust is intolerable. To the south of the road is the mountain of San Pedro, from which, in the rainy seasons, the torrents bring down gold-dust. There was a mine

* Pike, p. 329. This Traveller states the population as high as 60,000.

† Probably limestone.

here formerly, which was filled up about forty years ago through the caving-in of the galleries. At three hours' distance from San Luis is the *hacienda* of *Laguna Seca*, where the travellers halted for the night.

The same clayey soil and bare country continued the whole of the next day's journey. In summer, however, this arid plain is covered with verdant pastures; but the inhabitants suffer inconvenience from want of wood. At this season, (November,) the pools and tanks are often covered with ice before day-light; but, about noon, the heat is insufferable, and the change from the cold of the morning renders it injurious to travel after that hour. The third day, our Traveller reached the village of San Isidro, having passed, early in the morning, the *hacienda* of Peotillas, where Mina encamped the night before he fought the most brilliant action of the whole campaign. The chain of mountains which contain the rich mines of Catorce, are distinguishable far on the traveller's left. San Isidro stands in a narrow valley on the eastern side of a limestone mountain covered with oaks. At six hours' distance from this village is Quelitan, where the fourth day's journey terminated, because there was no water within several leagues of the place. There are no running streams, and the only water is supplied by tanks and wells, which are often distant from each other. The whole tract, at this season of the year, is transformed into an arid desert of drifting sand, and the south-western wind is as parching as the sirocco. Nothing can be more wretched than the habitations. They are huts built of stones and mud, not more than five feet from the ground, and thatched with yucca leaves, the earth-floors covered with filth, and the walls black with smoke, as there is no chimney. "I certainly," says

the American, " never saw a negro house in Carolina so comfortless." The people are very swarthy; they appear healthy and robust, and might enjoy every comfort of life. The valley produces good crops of maize; and a species of agave which grows wild in the mountains, yields them *pulque* and brandy, hemp, and soap. In the evening, the village-well presented a primitive scene: all the girls repaired thither, each with a small jar or pitcher on her shoulder, while two men were seen drawing water for the cattle.

The fifth day, the Author halted at the village of La Viga, a counterpart to Quelitan; and on the next day, after passing over the mountains of Norla, reached the town of Tula,—" the fit capital of such a country, badly built, and so gloomy, that not even the crowd of well-dressed peasantry that filled the streets, (it was Sunday,) could enliven its appearance. Tula was formerly a mission, afterwards a *presidio* or frontier fortress, and is now called a town. The houses are built of *adobes*, and it contains about 1,500 inhabitants. The men are well dressed in leather breeches and jackets, and most of them have shirts and stockings, and a manta thrown over their shoulder. The women are neatly dressed, and look clean and healthy. Their dress consists of a shift, one or more petticoats of striped cotton stuff, and a shawl, which they throw gracefully over their shoulder, and which they are never without when in company. I have seen them washing and cooking, very much distressed to manage this part of their dress, but persevere in wearing it, notwithstanding the inconvenience it put them to."

Soon after leaving Tula, the whole face of nature becomes changed. The traveller descends by a winding road into a fertile valley, cultivated with maize, scattered over with neat farm-houses, and intersected by

streams of water. He proceeds through this valley for three hours, and then crosses the range of hills which enclose it on the east. A fine plain extends from their summit, covered with verdure and skirted with woods of oak, beyond which the traveller enters on the first steep descent from the table-land towards the coast. The road is here very precipitous, the scenery most magnificent, embracing two ranges of mountains towards the east, and the vegetation begins to assume a new character of luxuriance. It is a descent of two hours and a half to the plain of *Los Gallos*. A short ride (the next day) brought our Traveller to the edge of the mountain of La Contadera, the second descent towards the coast, which is still more steep and difficult than that of Los Gallos. They had now entered the *tierra caliente*, having passed the dividing line where the inhabitants of the table-land begin to suffer from the heat, and those of the coast to complain of the cold. This day's journey terminated at the village of San Barbara, situated at the extremity of a very extensive plain, in the midst of a grove of evergreens. This place is renowned for its manufacture of stamped leather for saddle covers and leggings. The next day, the travellers descended in succession the mountains of Chamal and Cucharras, by very precipitous tracks, and reached a *rancho* on the banks of the river Limon. Fording this river, the water of which came up to the saddle-girths, they soon left behind all appearance of luxuriant vegetation, and for six hours passed over a parched and arid plain. In two hours more, after crossing the river Raya de Sargento, they reached the poor village of Orcasitas. A sterile plain, over which they passed for five hours, extends to the miserable *rancho* of Carizo. Another day's journey of seven hours, still over a plain aban-

doned to vast herds of cattle, was terminated by bivouacking at the edge of a deep wood. The next day, the thirteenth from San Luis, a seven hours' ride brought them to Altamira. But, "what a place to be called Altamira!" is the Author's exclamation. "The town consists of a few tolerable houses in the square, a church, a collection of thatched cottages, and it commands a view of swamps and lagunes." Both this place and Tampico are unhealthy, with this difference, that here bilious fevers prevail, and there, yellow fever. Tampico (*Pueblo Viejo*), which may be considered as the port of the great river Tampico, or Panuco, is about five leagues from the sea, on the margin of a small lake: it is ill built, dirty, and unhealthy, and yet, it is a place of some trade. Here the American Traveller embarked for the Havannah.

INTERIOR EASTERN PROVINCES.

The intendancy of San Luis Potosi, under the vice-regal government, comprehended the whole of the north-eastern part of the kingdom, including a surface of 27,800 square leagues, (larger than that of all Spain,) but with a population not exceeding 334,900, or twelve inhabitants to a square league. It had upwards of 230 leagues of coast, an extent equal to the whole line of coast from Genoa to Reggio in Calabria; but the whole of this coast remained without commerce and without activity. The intendant had under his administration, 1. the province of San Luis, extending from the river Panuco to the river Santander; 2. the new kingdom of Leon and the colony of New Santander, in the vice-royalty of Mexico; and 3. the provinces of Cohahuila and Texas, which belonged to the captain-generalship of the east. "But this immense country," says

Humboldt, "gifted by nature with the most precious productions, and situated under a serene sky, in the temperate zone towards the borders of the tropic, is, for the most part, a wild desert, still more thinly peopled than the governments of Asiatic Russia." The northern limits of the intendancy are indeterminate. On the north-west, the mountainous tract called the *Bolson de Mapimi*, including more than 3000 square leagues, is in the possession of wandering and independent Indians, called *Apaches*, who occasionally make incursions to attack the colonists of Cohahuila and Durango. On the north-east, the provinces of New Santander and Texas border on (the latter, in fact, chiefly consists of) disputed territory.

That part of the coast which extends along the Gulf of Mexico, from the mouth of the great Rio del Norte to the Rio Sabina, is still almost unknown, having never been explored by navigators. According to Humboldt, the eastern coast of Mexico presents every where similar obstacles,—"a want of depth for vessels drawing more than twelve feet and a half, bars at the mouths of the rivers, necks of land, and long islets stretching in a direction parallel to the continent, which prevent all access to the interior basin. * The shores of Santander and Texas, from the twenty-first to the twenty-ninth parallel, are singularly festooned, and present a succession of interior basins (or salt-water lakes) from four to five leagues in breadth, and from forty to fifty in length. Some of them (the *laguna de Tamiagua*,

* The harbour at the mouth of the *Rio del Norte*, however, said to be the best on the coast, has never less than thirteen feet water at its entrance, and as the tide here sometimes rises three feet, it might admit vessels of 400 tons. It is defended from the prevailing storms by the island *Malahuitas*. The river is navigable forty leagues up, and might be made so, with very little exertion, thirty leagues higher. Such was the statement made by D. Miguel Ramas de Arispe to the Cortes at Cadiz.

for example) are completely shut in. Others (as the *laguna Madre* and the *laguna de San Bernardo*) communicate by several channels with the ocean. The latter are of great advantage for a coasting trade, as coasting vessels are there secure from the great swells of the ocean." There can be little doubt that these long and narrow islets are, as the learned Traveller conjectures, bars or shoals, which have gradually risen above the mean level of the water; and that the Mexican coast resembles, in this respect, the shores of Rio Grande do Sul, in Brazil. The port of Tampico, however, although the bar prevents the entry of vessels drawing more than twenty feet water,* would still be preferable, Humboldt thinks, to the dangerous anchorage among the shallows of Vera Cruz; and the climate, though unhealthy, has not hitherto proved so prejudicial to the health of Europeans, or of the inhabitants of the table-land, as the more southern port. A project was at one time entertained for cutting a navigable canal from the capital to Tampico. This would not be impracticable, notwithstanding that the waters of the lake of Tezcuco are upwards of 7500 feet above the sea; but, as it would require at least 200 locks, it would not, in the opinion of this Author, be advisable, land carriage under such circumstances being preferable. It has already been mentioned, that Tampico was one of the four places thought of as a port for the commerce of the capital, instead of Vera Cruz. Were the road rendered more practicable, it might, perhaps, attract

* The Author of Notes on Mexico says, that the narrow channel admits only vessels of *eight* feet draught. The bar, in blowing weather, he says, is very dangerous; a heavy sea rolls on it. The road-stead is open, and during the prevalence of north-western gales, no ship can approach the land.

a portion of the trade. At present, it is visited chiefly by small vessels from the West Indies, which come here to lay in provisions.

Sotto la Marina, near the bar of the river Santander, in lat. 23° 45′ N., would seem to be by far too distant from the capital to answer the purpose of a port for its commerce; and indeed, according to Mr. Robinson's description of it, it is less accessible than Tampico. "The mouth of the river Santander," he says, "is very narrow, and has a bar across it, over which vessels drawing more than six feet water cannot be carried. Near the beach, the country is intersected by shallow ponds, extending a long way to the northward. After passing the bar, the river suddenly widens, but afterwards gradually contracts itself towards the town of Sotto la Marina. It is navigable for such vessels as can pass the bar, to within a very short distance of the town, beyond which it is too shallow even for boats. The village (*pueblo*) of Sotto la Marina stands upon an elevated situation, on the left bank of the river, eighteen leagues from its mouth. The old settlement is but a short distance up the river, on the road to the present village."* Could the port be remedied, however, this place would rise into importance, and would soon attract a large portion of the commerce of San Luis Potosi, Zacatecas, and Durango. It was here that Mina disembarked his troops; here too, Iturbidé, by a striking coincidence, landed, to meet a similar fate.†

At present, Humboldt says, the province of New Santander is so desert, that fertile districts of ten or twelve square leagues were sold there in 1802

* Robinson's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 140. † See vol. i. pp. 119, 157.

for ten or twelve francs. Major Pike estimates the population of this province, which extends 500 miles from north to south, and is about 150 in breadth, at 38,000 souls. The whole of the northern part of the intendancy of San Luis, that is to say, Santander, New Leon, Cohahuila, and Texas, are very low regions, with little undulation of surface. The soil is covered with secondary and alluvial formations. The climate is unequal, extremely hot in summer, and equally cold in winter, when the north winds prevail.

That which bears the pompous title of the new kingdom of Leon, is not above 250 miles in length; its population is estimated at 30,000 souls. Its capital, Montelrey, situated on the head waters of the *Rio Tigre*, in lat. 26° N. and long. 102° W., is the seat of a bishop, whose diocese extends over Santander, Leon, Cohahuila, and Texas.* The population of the city is said to amount to 11,000, or more than a third of the whole province. Major Pike says: "There are many and rich mines near this city, whence, I am informed, are taken one hundred mules' loads of bullion monthly, which may be presumed to be not more than three-fifths of what is drawn from the mines, there being many persons who prefer never getting their metal coined." The only other towns are *Linares*, between the *Rio Tigre* and the great *Rio Bravo del Norte;* and *Saltelo*, where there is held an annual fair, at which an immense quantity of merchandise is disposed of.

The province of Cohahuila (written by Major Pike, Cogquilla), lies between lat. 23° and 31° 30′ N. and

* It is afterwards stated, however, by Major Pike, that Cohahuila is in the diocese of Durango.

long. 101° and 105° W.; its greatest length being 500 miles, and its greatest width 200 miles. Montelovez (or Monclova), the residence of the governor, is the principal military depôt for Cohahuila and Texas. It is situated on a small stream of water, in lat. 26° 33′ N., long. 103° 30′ W.; it is about a mile in length; has two public squares, seven churches, powder magazines, mills, barracks, and an hospital; and contains between 3 and 4000 inhabitants. "This city," says Major Pike, "being the stated residence of his excellency Governor Cordero, has been ornamented by him with public walks, columns, and fountains, and made one of the handsomest cities in the internal provinces." * There are some mines in the neighbourhood, but they are inconsiderable. At *Santa Rosa*, however, about thirty-eight miles to the N.W. of Montelovez, there are silver-mines, said to be as rich as any in the kingdom. This town is situated on some of the head waters of the river *Millada*, in a very healthy situation; its population is estimated at 4,000 souls. *Parras*, in the same province, situated on a small stream, is supposed to contain, with its suburbs, 7,000 souls, and San Lorenzo, a village three miles to the north, contains about 500. The district of Parras is the vineyard of Cohahuila; the name signifies vines or vine-branches; and the whole population are employed in the cultivation of the grape. "At the *hacienda* of San Lorenzo, where we halted," says the American Major, "were fifteen large stills, and larger cellars, and a greater number of casks than I ever saw in any brewery in the United States. Its gardens were delightfully interspersed with figs, vines, apricots, and a variety of

* Pike's Explor. Travels, p. 362.

fruits which are produced in the torrid zone; with fine summer-houses, where were wine, refreshments, and couches to repose on, and where the singing of the birds was delightful. There were here, likewise, mills, and a fine water-fall." * The *presidio* of *Rio Grande*, situated on the river of that name, (the only one of magnitude in the province,) contains about 2,500 inhabitants; and the total population of Cohahuila is estimated at 70,000 souls, not more than 10,000 of whom are Spaniards. The climate is described as pure and healthy, except about the middle of May, when the heat is intense; "and sometimes a scorching wind is felt, like the flame issuing from an oven or furnace, which frequently skins the face, and affects the eyes. This phenomenon is more sensibly felt about sunset, than at any other period of the twenty-four hours." This province receives all its merchandise from Mexico by land, and, in return, gives horses, mules, wines, gold, and silver. The large annual fair held at Saltelo, in New Leon, is attended by the traders of Cohahuila. The vine is the chief article of cultivation, together with grain and corn sufficient for home consumption and for the supply of the greater part of Texas.

The capital of Texas, *St. Antonio de Bejar*, is situated on the head waters of the river of that name, (Humboldt says, between the *Rio de San Antonio* and the *Rio de los Nogales*,) in lat. 29° 50′ N., and long. 101° W. "It perhaps contains," Major Pike states, "2,000 souls, most of whom reside in miserable mud-wall houses covered with thatch-grass roofs. The town is laid out on a very grand plan: to the east of it, on the other side of the river, is the station of the

* Pike's Explor. Travels, p. 362.

troops. About two, three, and four miles from St. Antonio, are three missions, formerly flourishing and prosperous. These buildings, for solidity, accommodation, and even majesty, were surpassed by few that I met with in" (the internal provinces of) "New Spain.* *Nacogdoches* is merely a station for troops, and contains nearly 500 souls: it is situated on a small branch of the river Toyac. The population of Texas may be estimated at 7000: these are principally Spanish Creoles, some French, some Americans, and a few civilised Indians and half-breeds. This province trades with Mexico by Montelrey and Montelovez for merchandise, and with New Orleans by Natchitoches; but the latter, being contraband, is liable to great damage and risks. They give in return, specie, horses, and mules." Being on the frontiers, where buffaloes, deer, elk, and wild horses abound in great numbers, the inhabitants of Texas lead, for the most part, the life of hunters, and agriculture is but little attended to, except by a few emigrants from the United States. The only mine known and worked, is one of lead. This province is

* "The resident priest treated us with the greatest hospitality; he is respected and beloved by all who know him. He made a singular observation relative to the *aborigines*, who had formerly composed the population of these establishments, under the charge of the monks. I asked him what had become of the natives; he replied, that it appeared to him that *they could not exist under the shadow of the whites*, as the nations who formed these missions had been nurtured and taken all the care of that was possible, and put on the same footing as the Spaniards; yet, they had notwithstanding dwindled away, until the other two had become entirely depopulated, and the one where he resided, had not more than sufficient to perform his household labour. From this he had formed an idea, that God never intended them to form one people, but that they should always remain distinct and separate!!"—PIKE, p. 368.

"well timbered" for one hundred miles from the coast, with small *prairies* interspersed throughout the woody country. "Taken generally," says this Traveller, "it is one of the richest, most prolific, and best watered* countries in North America." It is also one of the most delightful climates in the world, and, where the ground has been sufficiently cleared, not unhealthy. It possesses an extensive internal navigation; and, in fact, it is so desirable a country, that it is not likely much longer to belong to Mexico. According to the representations of the congress of Washington, the whole of Texas properly belongs to Louisiana.

In the distribution of Mexico into federal states, the internal provinces of the east are already separated from San Luis Potosi. Other changes must follow. Humboldt, speaking of this vast tract of country, remarks, that "its position on the eastern limits of New Spain, the proximity of the United States, the frequency of communication with the colonists of Louisiana, and other circumstances, will probably soon favour the progress of civilization and prosperity in these vast and fertile regions."

The only part of the intendancy of San Luis which is mountainous, is that which borders on the province of Zacatecas. Here are situated the rich mines of

* The principal rivers are, the river Guadalupe, with its confluents, the Rio San Antonio and St. Mark, which discharges itself into the N.W. end of the bay of St. Bernard; the Red River (*Rio Colorado*), which rises in Cohahuila, in lat. 33° N.; long. 104° 30′ W., and, after a winding course of 600 miles, discharges itself in the bay of St. Bernard; the river Brassos, which also rises in Cohahuila, in lat. 34°, long. 105°, and falls into the Gulf of Mexico, after a course of 700 miles,—it is the largest river in the province; the river Trinity, with its confluents, the Natchez and the Angelina, which discharges itself into Galveston bay; the river Toyac; and the "Sabine river."

Charcas, Catorce, and Guadalcazar, which belong to the "central groupe" that has yielded so large a proportion of the silver of Mexico. "The mineral repository of Catorce," says Humboldt, "holds at present the second or third rank among the mines of New Spain, classing them according to the quantity of silver which they produce. It was only discovered in the year 1778. This discovery, and that of the veins of Gualgayoc in Peru, (vulgarly called the veins of Chota,) are the most interesting in the history of the mines of Spanish America for the last two centuries. The small town of Catorce (the true name of which is *la Purissima Concepcion de Alamos de Catorce*), is situated on the calcareous table-land, which declines towards the new kingdom of Leon and the province of Santander. From the bosom of these mountains of secondary compact limestone rise up masses of basalt and porous amygdaloid, which resemble volcanic productions, and contain olivine, zeolite, and obsidian. A great number of veins of small extent, and very variable in their breadth and direction, traverse the limestone, which itself covers a transition clay-slate. The minerals are generally found in a state of decomposition. They are wrought with the mattock, pick-axe, and bore (*pointrole*). The consumption of powder is much less than at Guanaxuato and at Zacatecas. These mines possess also the great advantage of being almost entirely dry, so that they have no need of costly machinery to draw off the water.* In 1773, Sebastian Caronado and Antonio Llanas, two very poor individuals, discovered veins in a situation now called *Cerro de Catorce Viejo*, on the western slope of

* This, it will be seen presently, has proved to be incorrect.

the *Pichaco de la Variga de Plata*. They began to work these veins, which were poor and inconstant in their produce. In 1778, Don Barnabé Antonio de Zepeda, a miner of the *Ojo del Agua de Matchuala*, investigated, during three months, this groupe of arid and calcareous mountains. After attentively examining the ravines, he was fortunate enough to find the *crest* or surface of the *veta grande*, on which he immediately dug the pit of *Guadalupe*. He drew from it an immense quantity of muriate of silver, and *colorados* mixed with native gold, and gained in a short time more than 100,000*l.* sterling. From that period, the mines of Catorce were wrought with the greatest activity. That of *Padre Flores* alone produced, in the first year, upwards of 350,000*l.* sterling; but the vein displayed great riches only from 160 to 320 feet of perpendicular depth. The famous mine of *Purissima*, belonging to Colonel Obregon, has scarcely ever ceased since 1788 to yield annually, a net profit of 40,000*l.* sterling; and its produce in 1796, amounted to 1,200,000 piastres, while the working did not amount to more than 80,000. The vein of *Purissima*, which is not the same with that of *Padre Flores*, sometimes reaches the extraordinary extent of 130 feet; and it was worked in 1802 to the depth of nearly 1,600 feet. Since 1798, the value of the minerals of Catorce has singularly diminished: the native silver is now rarely to be seen; and the *metales colorados*, which are an intimate mixture of muriate of silver, earthy carbonate of lead, and red ochre, begin to give place to pyritous and coppery minerals. The actual produce of these mines is nearly 260,000 lb. troy of silver annually." *

Since the period of Humboldt's visit, however,

* Pol. Essay, vol. iii. pp. 209—12.

these rich mines have become filled with water. "In order to render them once more productive," we are told, "the owners, the family of Obregon, have made an arrangement with an English commercial house, by which they agree to give up one-half of their right and title, on condition of having them freed from water. For this purpose, a steam-engine of one hundred horse power has been brought from England; the greater part of which, after several months' labour, is still at the foot of the mountains. It is said, that *coal has been discovered not far from this mine.*" *

SAN BLAS.

MENTION has already been made, in the description of the Baxio, of the Bay of San Blas, in which the river Santiago has its outlet. That port, hitherto but little known, yet, next to Acapulco, the most important on the western coast, bids fair to become of considerable consequence. The rich products of Guanaxuato and Guadalaxara can, by means of the Santiago, be most easily transported to the coast; and those provinces can be supplied with Asiatic merchandise at a cheaper rate by the same route.

The Conway, commanded by Captain Basil Hall, was the first English man-of-war that had ever an-

* When Mr. Bullock was in Mexico, the whole had safely arrived, and he heard in connexion with it the following anecdote. The engine for draining the mine being drawn one evening to the mouth of the shaft, the mine was plumbed, to ascertain the depth of water. The same process was repeated the next morning, when, from some unknown cause, the water had sunk several feet. The natives, who were attracted in vast numbers, exclaimed in astonishment, that now they were convinced the English were gods, and had power to control the metals, since merely drawing the engine to the mouth of the mine had caused the water to sink so many feet! The English house alluded to is that of Messrs. Gordon and Murphy.

chored in the port of San Blas. Although the distance from Acapulco is not more than 500 miles, it took sixteen days to make the passage.* The town is perched, like an eagle's nest, on the top of a rock 150 feet high, absolutely precipitous on three sides, and very steep on the fourth; rising out of a low, swampy plain, which, in the rainy season, is laid completely under water, and is overflowed to a considerable extent by the sea at spring-tides. The fine season lasts from December to May inclusive. "During that interval," says Capt. Hall, "the sky is always clear; no rain falls; land and sea-breezes prevail; and, as there is then no sickness, the town is crowded with inhabitants. From June to November, a very different order of things takes place. The heat is greatly increased; the sky becomes overcast; the sea and land-breezes no longer blow; but, in their stead, hard storms sweep along the coast, and excessive rains deluge the country; with occasional violent squalls of wind, accompanied by thunder and lightning. During this period, San Blas is rendered uninhabitable, in consequence of the sickness, and of the violence of the rain; which not only drenches the whole town, but, by flooding the surrounding country, renders the rock on which the town is built, literally an island. The whole rainy season, indeed, is sickly, but more

* This was reckoned a good passage for the month of March. In the latter days of December, it has been made in ten days. Capt. Hall mentions a case in which a merchant brig was a fortnight in reaching Cape Corrientes from the time of passing Acapulco at the distance of 150 miles, and nearly three weeks afterwards in getting to San Blas, a distance of only 70 miles. The coast between Cape Corrientes, and San Blas is full of deep and dangerous rocky bights, is little known, and ought not to be approached. Cape Corrientes is in lat. 20° 24′ 32″ N.; long. 105° 42′ 26″ W. San Blas is in lat. 21° 32′ 24″; long. 105° 18′ 27″ W.

especially so towards the end, when the rains become less violent and less frequent; while the intense heat acts with mischievous effect on the saturated soil, and raises an atmosphere of malaria, such as the most seasoned native cannot breathe with impunity.

"This being invariably the state of the climate, nearly all the inhabitants abandon the town as soon as the rainy season approaches. As we had often heard this migration described, we waited, with some curiosity, for the arrival of the appointed time; and, accordingly, towards the end of May, had the satisfaction of seeing the great flight commence. I shall never forget the singular nature of the scene which was presented to us. All the world began to move nearly at the same time; the rich and the poor streamed off indiscriminately together. The high road to Tepic was covered with horses, loaded mules, and foot passengers, winding along the plain on their way to the interior. On passing through the streets, we saw people everywhere fastening up their windows, locking their doors, and marching off with the keys, leaving the greater part of their property behind them, unguarded by any thing but the pestilence of the climate. The better classes rode away on horseback, leaving their baggage to follow on mules; but the finances of the greater part of the inhabitants did not admit of this; and we saw many interesting family groupes, where the very aged and the very young people were huddled on mules, already loaded with goods and with furniture, while the men and the women, and the stouter children, walked by their sides;—a scene from which a painter might have collected innumerable subjects of interest.

"A city without people is at any time a strange and anomalous circumstance; but it seemed peculiarly

so to us, by our friends leaving us day by day; till, at length, we found ourselves comparatively alone in the deserted town. The governor and his family, and one or two other officers of government, with a few shopkeepers, remained till our departure; but, with these exceptions, the inhabitants had nearly all gone before we sailed. There are, it is true, always a few people, who, for high pay, agree to watch valuable property, and some families so miserably destitute, that they absolutely have not the means of removing. The population of the town, in the fine season, is about 3,000, but the number which remains to brave the climate, seldom exceeds 150."

The commencement of the rains, as witnessed by this Traveller, is described with graphic force and spirit in the following paragraphs.

"This day (June 1, 1822) broke with an unwonted gloom overshadowing everything: a dense, black haze rested like a high wall round the horizon; while the upper sky, so long without a single speck, was stained all over with patches of shapeless clouds flying in different directions. As the sun rose, he was attended by vapours and clouds, which concealed him from our sight. The sea-wind, which used to begin gently, and then gradually increase to a pleasant breeze, came on suddenly and with great violence; so that the waves curled and broke into a white sheet of foam as far as the eye could reach. The sea looked bleak and stormy under the portentous influence of an immense mass of dark clouds, rising slowly in the western quarter, till they reached nearly to the zenith, where they continued suspended like a mantle during the whole day. The ships which heretofore had lain motionless on the surface of the bay, were now rolling and pitching with their cables stretched out to sea-

ward; while the boats that used to skim along from the shore to the vessels at anchor, were seen splashing through the waves under a reefed sail, or struggling hard with their oars to evade the surf, breaking and roaring along the coast. The flags that were wont to lie idly asleep by the sides of the mast, now stood stiffly out in the storm. Innumerable sea-birds continued during all the day, wheeling round the rock on which the town stood, and screaming as if in terror at this sudden change. The dust of six months' hot weather, raised into high pyramids, was forced by furious gusts of wind into the innermost corners of the houses. Long before sunset, it seemed as if the day had closed, owing to the darkness caused by the dust in the air, and to the sky being overcast in every part by unbroken masses of watery clouds. Presently lightning was observed amongst the hills, followed shortly afterwards by a storm exceeding in violence anything I ever met with. During eight hours, deluges of rain never ceased pouring down for a moment: the steep streets of the town soon became the channels of continued streams of such magnitude, as to sweep away large stones; rendering it everywhere dangerous, and in some places quite impossible to pass. The rain found its way through the roofs, and drenched every part of the houses; the deep rumbling noise of the torrents in the streets never ceased; the deafening loudness of the thunder, which seemed to cling round the rock, became distracting; while the continued flashes of the forked lightning, which played in the most brilliant manner from the zenith to the horizon on all sides, were at once beautiful and terrific. I never witnessed such a night.

"As the next day broke, the rain ceased; and during all the morning there was a dead calm: the

air was so sultry that it was painful to breathe it; and though the sky remained overcast, the sun had power to raise up clouds of steam, which covered the whole plain as far as the base of the mountains.

"No very violent rain fell after this furious burst, till the evening of the 4th of June, when the periodical wet season set in. During the mornings, it was generally clear and fair; but about half past three or four o'clock, the sky became rapidly overcast, and at five the rain began: though it was seldom before eight, that it fell in the torrents I have described, or that the thunder and lightning commenced with great violence."

San Blas would be scarcely habitable during what is termed the fine season, were it not for the regular alternation of the sea and land-breezes which prevail at that time.* "Between ten and eleven o'clock in the morning," says Capt. H., "the sea-breeze begins to set in. None but those who have felt the bodily and mental exhaustion caused by the hot nights and sultry mornings of low latitudes, can form a just conception of the delicious refreshment of this wind. For some time before it actually reaches the spot, its approach is felt and joyfully hailed by people who, a few minutes before, appeared quite subdued by the heat, but who now acquire a sudden animation and revival of their faculties; a circumstance which strangers, who have not learned to discover the approach of the sea-breeze, are often at a loss to account for. When it has fairly set in, the climate in the shade is delightful; but, in the sun, it is scarcely ever supportable at San Blas. Between three and four o'clock, the sea-breeze generally

* The burning shores of Asia Minor are in like manner preserved from depopulation by a similar phenomenon.—See MODERN TRAVELLER, *Syria, &c.*, vol. ii. p. 106.

dies away; it rarely lasts till five. The oppression during the interval of calm which succeeds between this period and the coming of the land-wind, baffles all description. The flat-roofed houses, from having been all day exposed to the sun, resemble ovens; and as it is many hours before they part with their heat, the inhabitants are sadly baked before the land-wind comes to their relief.

"During the morning, the thorough draft of air, even when the sun is blazing fiercely in the sky, keeps the rooms tolerably cool; but, when the breeze is gone, they become quite suffocating. The evil is heightened most seriously by clouds of mosquitoes, and, what are still more tormenting, of sand-flies, an animal so diminutive, as scarcely to be distinguished till the eye is directed to the spot they settle upon, by the pain of their formidable puncture. San Blas, as mentioned before, is built on the top of a rock, standing in a level, swampy plain. During ordinary tides in the dry season, this plain is kept merely in a half-dried, steaming state; but at spring-tides, a considerable portion of it is overflowed. The effect of this inundation is to dislodge from the swamp, myriads of mosquitoes, sand-flies, and other insects, which had been increasing and multiplying on the surface of the mud during the low tides. These animals, on being disturbed, fly to the first resting-place they can find; and the unhappy town of San Blas, being the only conspicuous object in the neighbourhood, is fairly enveloped, at the full and change of the moon, in a cloud of insects, producing a plague, the extent of which, if properly described, would scarcely be credited by the inhabitants of a cold climate. The most seasoned native fared in this instance no better than ourselves; and we sometimes derived a perverse sort of satisfac-

tion from this companionship in misery, and laughed at seeing them rolling about from chair to chair, panting under the heat, and irritated into a fever, by the severe and unintermitted attacks of their indefatigable tormentors. I cannot say which was worst, the unceasing buzz and fierce sting of the mosquito, or the silent but multiplied assaults of the sand-flies, which came against the face, as I heard a miserable man exclaim one evening, like handfuls of sand. Mosquito curtains offered no defence against these invisible foes, so that there was nothing for it but to submit. It is perhaps worthy of remark, that those persons invariably suffered most, who were least temperate in their diet; and that the water-drinkers (that rare species) were especially exempted from the feverish discipline of these attacks. It was perfectly out of the question to try to get any sleep before the land-wind set; but this often deceived us, and at best seldom came before midnight, and then it blew over the hot plain, and reached us loaded with offensive vapours from the marsh; but this was nothing, as it served to disperse the sand-flies, and gradually acquired a degree of coolness, which allowed us to drop asleep towards morning—worn out with heat, vexation, and impotent rage."

San Blas was, under the vice-regal administration, the residence of the *Departimiento de Marina* (marine department), and the chief dock-yards and magazines being here, it might be regarded as the Portsmouth of Mexico. The official people, however, Humboldt says, resided at Tepic, a small town in a more salubrious climate. Captain Hall, on finding that the merchants, both English and Spanish, lived, some at Tepic, and others at the provincial capital, Guadalaxara, determined on proceeding to the former place,

in order to ascertain how far he might be able to contribute to advance the interests of the British trade in that quarter. The first part of the journey lay across low swamps, covered with brushwood, and enveloped (in March) in creeping mists. In the course of "a few hours," the road begins to ascend the hills, which are richly wooded: festoons of innumerable parasitical plants, extending from tree to tree, wave gracefully above the impervious underwood, which totally conceals the ground, giving the forest the appearance of an Indian jungle. The traveller passes several villages of huts built of canes, with peaked roofs rising to twice the height of the walls, thatched with the large, leafy branches of the cocoa-palm, fastened down with rattans. About half way to Tepic is the village of Fonsequa. The rest of the journey lies through a thick forest, along wild mountain paths, the road continually on the ascent; and to the European, the sensible change in the temperature becomes most inspiriting. The mountain scenery is described as highly magnificent. Capt. Hall passed the night in a hut, and by day-break next morning, after travelling over some hills, he came in sight of Tepic, beautifully situated in the midst of a cultivated plain.

TEPIC.

This town, the second in importance in this intendancy, is situated nearly in the centre of a basin, or valley, formed by an irregular chain of volcanic mountains. Its appearance is rendered very lively by rows of trees, gardens, and terraced walks intermixed with the houses, all kept green and fresh by the waters of the river which washes the town on three sides. A broad, public walk, nearly half a mile in

length, shaded by four or five rows of chesnut-trees, leads to the church of *La Santa Cruz*, which stands in a little hollow behind a small grassy knoll, in a secluded and picturesque situation. It belongs to a convent. Hither, about an hour before sunset, apparently the whole female population repair, in family groupes, to attend the evening service. "The ladies of Tepic," Capt. Hall says, "have already learned to dress in the European style; of course some years behind in the fashion, but without any thing peculiar to describe. The women of the lower class wore lively coloured gowns, and scarfs called *rebozos*, generally of a blue and white pattern, not printed, but woven. The dress of the lowest class was of cotton only; that of the others was a mixture of cotton and silk, and that of the richest people entirely of silk; the whole being of the manufacture of the country. The gentlemen wear low-brimmed, brown hats, encircled by a thick gold or silver band, twisted up like a rope. When mounted, every gentleman carries a sword, not belted round him, as with us, but thrust, in a slanting direction, into a case made for the purpose in the left flap of the saddle, so that the sword lies under, not over the thigh, while the hilt rises nearly as high as the pommel of the saddle, where it is more readily grasped, in case of need, than when left dangling by the side. The saddle rises abruptly four or five inches, both before and behind, in order, as I was told, to give the rider support both in going up and down the very steep roads of the country. On each side of the saddle, before the knees, hangs a large skin of some shaggy-coated animal, reaching nearly to the ground: in wet weather, these skins are drawn over the rider's legs, while what is called the mangas covers the body. This is a cloak exactly resembling the poncho of the

south, being of an oblong form, with a hole in the middle to receive the head. In Mexico, these cloaks are generally made of fine cloth, richly ornamented round the neck with gold embroidery. The stirrups are made of wood, taken no doubt from the Spanish box-stirrup, but they are more neatly made than in Spain, and are lighter, and fit the foot better. Every gentleman rides with a pair of silver spurs of immoderate length and weight; and, instead of a whip, holds in his hand a long and curiously twisted set of thongs, which are merely a tapered continuation of the slender strips of hide of which the bridle is made, plaited into a round cord."

This sprightly writer gives an amusing description of a *tertulia*, or evening party, which will serve to illustrate the state of manners in Mexico at this period, among the Spanish residents.

"Across the upper end of a large room, and for some distance along the sides, were seated the ladies, about twenty in number, in a compact line, and glued as it were to the wall. Sometimes in the course of the evening, a gentleman succeeded in obtaining a station amongst the ladies, but he was generally an intimate acquaintance or a very determined stranger. In each corner of the room was placed a small stone table, on which stood a dingy tallow-candle, the feeble glimmer of which gave a dismal light to the room; but, by an incongruity characteristic of the country, the candlestick was large and handsome, and made of massy silver. Behind the light, in a glass case, was displayed an image of the Virgin, dressed up as Nuestra Senora de Guadaloupe, the patron saint of Mexico, almost suffocated with a profusion of tawdry artificial flowers. The line of ladies on one side reached to the door, and, on the side opposite, to a

table about half-way along the room, on which were placed wine and water, gentlemen's hats and ladies' shawls. Against one of the corner tables rested a guitar; and it seldom happened that there was not some person present, ready to play a popular tune, or to accompany the ladies, many of whom sung very prettily. This occasional music went on without interrupting the conversation; indeed, the sound of the guitar amongst the Spaniards or their descendants, is so familiar, that it acts more as a stimulus, a sort of accompaniment to conversation, than as an interruption. At the further end of the room was a card-table, where most of the gentlemen played at a game called *monté*. The space in the middle of the room seemed to be allotted as a play-ground for the children of the house, and those of many removes in consanguinity. The nurses too, and the old servants of the family, used the privilege of walking in and out; and sometimes they addressed such of the company as happened to be seated near the door. It may be remarked here, that, in all those countries, a degree of familiarity is allowed between the servants and their superiors, of which in England there is no example in any rank of life.

"The entrance to the room was from a deep verandah, or, more properly speaking, a passage open to the court and flower-garden in the centre of the quadrangle forming the house.

"It occurred to me during the evening, that if a person were suddenly transported from England to this party, he might be much puzzled to say where he had got to. On entering the house, by an approach not unlike the arched gateway of an inn, he would turn into the verandah, where he would in vain inquire his way from one of the boys playing at bo-peep round

the columns, or scampering in the moon-light amongst the shrubs in the centre of the court; nor would he gain more information from the girls, who would draw up and become as prim and starch as possible the moment they beheld a stranger; they would pout at him, and transfix him with their coal-black eyes, but would not utter a single word. Mustering courage, he might enter the sala or drawing-room; in an instant, all the gentlemen would rise and stand before their chairs like statues; but as neither the mistress of the house, nor any other lady, ever thinks of rising, in those countries, to receive or take leave of a gentleman, our friend would be apt to conceive his reception somewhat cold. He could have no time to make minute remarks, and would scarcely notice the unevenly paved brick floor — the bare plastered walls — the naked beams of the roof, through which the tiles might be counted: indeed, the feebleness of the light would greatly perplex his observations. The elegant dresses, the handsome looks, and the lady-like appearance of the women, would naturally lead him to imagine he was in respectable company; but, when he discovered all the ladies smoking segars, and heard them laughing most obstreperously, and screaming out their observations at the top of their voices, he would relapse into his former doubts; especially when he remarked the gentlemen in boots and cloaks, and some with their hats on. Neither would his ideas be cleared up by seeing the party at the other end of the room engaged in deep play, amidst a cloud of tobacco smoke. And were he now as suddenly transported back again to his own country, it might be difficult to persuade him that he had been amongst an agreeable, amiable, and well-bred people — in the very best society — in the Grosvenor Square, in short, of the city of Tepic!"

The Indians here appeared to Captain Hall a small and feeble race of men. He saw a party of them who had come from the interior to purchase maize and other articles. "Each of them carried a bow, and about two dozen of arrows, and wore in his girdle a long, broad knife. Their dress was a coarse cotton shirt, made of cloth manufactured by themselves, and a pair of leather small-clothes, loose at the knees, and fringed with a line of tassels, and short strips of leather, each being intended to represent some article belonging to the wearer: one being his horse, another his bow, another larger and more ornamental standing for his wife, and so on. The most striking circumstance, however, was, that all these Indians wore feathers round their heads, precisely in the manner represented in the cuts which embellish the old accounts of the conquest. Some had tied round their straw hats a circle of red flowers, so much resembling feathers, that it was not easy to distinguish between the two. Several of them wore necklaces of white beads made of bone, the distinctive mark, as we were told, of being married. A little old man of the party, who seemed much entertained by our curiosity, begged our attention to a rod about two feet long, which he carried in his hand, and to the skin of a little bird of brilliant plumage, suspended at his left knee; these two symbols, he gave us to understand, belonged to him as chief of the village. The only woman of the party stood apart, wrapped in a coarse kind of blanket, holding the bridles of the mules. At first, they were rather alarmed at the interest we took in their dress and appearance, and, as they did not understand Spanish, shrunk back from us. But an obliging person in the market-place stepped forward to act as interpreter, which

soon reassured them, and they came round us afterwards with confidence; yet, it was with great reluctance they parted with their bows and arrows, and their feathered ornaments. The old man could not be prevailed upon to part with his rod of authority, or his official bird; neither could we induce them to sell, at any price, that part of their dress to which the inventory of their goods and chattels was appended."

These appear to have been a party of cacique Indians; but to what tribe they belonged, is not stated. Their bows and arrows resembled, we are told, those of school-boys, rather than the arms of men. At Tepic, as well as at San Blas, our Traveller found it disagreeably hot during the day;* but at night, the thermometer fell from fifteen to twenty degrees. During the middle of the day, no one can stir abroad. One o'clock is the invariable dinner hour, and from two to half-past three or four, "all the world" are taking their *siesta*, and the streets are literally deserted. After that hour, riding or walking parties are formed; and in the evening, every house is ready to receive visiters. The ladies receive company also about ten o'clock in the forenoon, either in the principal bed-chamber, or in the *sala*.

Captain Hall, while at Tepic, witnessed the opening of a Mexican bee-hive, which differs so essentially in its construction and materials from that of the English bee, that the description is highly acceptable. "The hive is generally made out of a log of wood from two to three feet long, and eight or ten inches in

* At San Blas, throughout the day, it was generally, in the coolest part of the shade, about 90°; sometimes, for several hours, 95°. At night, the thermometer stood generally between 80° and 85°.

diameter, hollowed out, and closed at the ends by circular doors, cemented closely to the wood, but capable of being removed at pleasure. Some persons use cylindrical hives made of earthenware, instead of the clumsy apparatus of wood; these are relieved by raised figures and circular rings, so as to form rather handsome ornaments in the verandah of a house, where they are suspended by cords from the roof, in the same manner that the wooden ones in the villages are hung to the eaves of the cottages. On one side of the hive, half-way between the ends, there is a small hole made, just large enough for a loaded bee to enter, and shaded by a projection to prevent the rain from trickling in. In this hole, generally representing the mouth of a man, or some monster, the head of which is moulded in the clay of the hive, a bee is constantly stationed; whose office is no sinecure, for the hole is so small, he has to draw back every time a bee wishes to enter or to leave the hive. A gentleman told me, that the experiment had been made, by marking the sentinel; when it was observed, that the same bee continued at his post a whole day. When it is ascertained by the weight, that the hive is full, the end pieces are removed, and the honey withdrawn. The hive we saw opened, was only partly filled; which enabled us to see the economy of the interior to more advantage. The honey is not contained in the elegant hexagonal cells of our hives, but in wax bags, not quite so large as an egg. These bags, or bladders, are hung round the sides of the hive, and appear about half full, the quantity being probably just as great as the strength of the wax will bear without tearing. Those near the bottom, being better supported, are more filled than the upper ones. In the centre of the lower part

of the hive, we observed an irregular-shaped mass of comb, furnished with cells, like those of our bees, all containing young ones, in such an advanced state, that when we broke the comb and let them out, they flew merrily away. During this examination of the hive, the comb and the honey were taken out, and the bees disturbed in every way; but they never stung us, though our faces and hands were covered with them. It is said, however, that there is a bee in the country which does sting; but the kind we saw, seem to have neither the power nor the inclination, for they certainly did not hurt us; and our friends said, they were always 'muy manso,' very tame, and never stung any one. The honey gave out a rich aromatic perfume, and tasted differently from ours, but possessed an agreeable flavour." *

Humboldt mentions the mines of Guichichila, near Tepic, as among the most celebrated in this intendancy; but Captain Hall does not appear to have made any inquiry on the subject.

GUADALAXARA.

THE intendancy of Guadalaxara formed, together with Zacatecas, the kingdom of New Gallicia. It is, in itself, almost twice the extent of Portugal, with a population five times smaller. The number of inhabitants in 1803, was 630,500, being 66 to the square league. It is bounded, on the north by Sonora and Durango; on the east, by Zacatecas and Guanax-

* Humboldt mentions a bee peculiar to the New Continent, said to be destitute of a sting, on which account they have received the name of *angelitos* (little angels). The learned Traveller supposes, however, that the organ is not wanting, but that the sting is weak and not very sensible.

nato; on the south, by Valladolid; and on the west, for a length of coast of 123 leagues, by the Pacific. Its extreme breadth, from San Blas to the town of Lagos, is 100 leagues, and its extent of surface is computed to be 9,612 square leagues. It is traversed from east to west by the Rio Grande de Santiago, which communicates with the great lake of Chapala, nearly 160 square leagues in extent, being double the size of the lake of Constance. This intendancy was reckoned one of the richest and most luxuriant in the vice-royalty. All the eastern part is formed by the table-land and western declivity of the Cordillera. The maritime regions are covered with forests, which abound with timber fit for ship-building. The interior enjoys a fine and temperate climate. The value of its agricultural produce amounted, in 1802, to 2,600,000 piasters (about 560,000*l.*); and its manufactures of woollens, calicoes, tanned hides, and soap, were estimated at 3,302,200 piasters (about 700,000*l.*), or nearly half of the total value of the manufactures of New Spain.* Up to 1765, it exported cotton and wool to maintain the activity of the manufactures of Puebla, Queretaro, and San Miguel; but since that period, manufactories have been established at Guadalaxara, Lagos, and the neighbouring towns. Its mines form the sixth groupe in Humboldt's enumeration,† but, with regard to the quantity of money actually drawn from them, the mines of Bolaños rank next to those of the Real del Monte, the central groupe of Guanaxuato, Catorce, and Zacatecas being alone superior to either. The mines

* This is estimated by Humboldt at between 7 and 8,000,000 of piasters.—*Pol. Essay*, vol. iii. p. 460.

† See vol. i. p. 318.

of Guadalaxara extend from lat. 21° 5′ to 22° 30′ N., and from long. 105° to 106° 30′ W. The most celebrated are those of *Bolaños*, *Asientos de Ibarra*, *Hostiotipaquillo*, *Copala*, and *Guichichila*. The intendancy contains two cities, six towns, and 322 villages.

Guadalaxara, the provincial capital, and formerly the seat of the *audiencia* of New Gallicia, is seated on the left bank of the Rio de Santiago, in lat. 20° 50′ N., long. 105° W.* It was founded in 1551, and in 1570, was created an episcopal city, the see of Compostella being transferred to this place. As the residence at once of the audiencia, the intendant, and the bishop, and possessing some flourishing manufactures, it would seem likely to have been from the first a considerable place; yet, Humboldt states the population in 1803, at only 19,500. If this be correct, its increase since that period must have been almost unprecedented. While the population of Guanaxuato has sunk from 70,000 to 33,000, that of Guadalaxara has risen from less than 20,000 to at least 70,000, and it now ranks, in point of population, as the second city in the empire.†

Compostella, situated to the south of Tepic, is the more ancient city. As, in the district to the north-west of this place, tobacco of a superior quality was formerly cultivated; it would seem to be situated either within, or on the border of the *tierra caliente* of the western coast. The other towns enumerated by Humboldt are, *Aguas Calientes*, a small, well-peopled town, to the south of the mines of *Asientos de Ibarra; Villa de la Purificacion*, to the north-west of

* Pike's Exploratory Travels, p. 326.

† Notes on Mexico, p. 110. Major Pike carries the estimate to 75,000.

the port of Guatlan; *Lagos*, to the north of the town of Leon, in Guanaxuato, near the frontier of that intendancy, "on a plain fertile in wheat" (a part of the Baxio); and *Colima*, situated two leagues south of the volcano of the same name.

The *volcan de Colima* is the most western of the volcanoes of Mexico, which are placed on the same line in a parallel direction. It frequently throws up ashes and smoke. Its elevation is computed to be upwards of 9,000 feet above the level of the sea. "This insulated mountain," says a native writer cited by Humboldt, "appears of only a moderate height, when its summit is compared with the ground on which Zapotilti and Zapotlan are built,—two villages elevated 5,500 feet above the level of the coast: it is from the small town of Colima that the volcano appears in all its grandeur. It is never covered with snow, except when it falls in the chain of the neighbouring mountains from the effects of the north-wind. On the 8th of December, 1788, the volcano was covered with snow for almost two-thirds of its height; but this snow remained for only two months on the northern declivity of the mountain towards Zapotlan. In the beginning of 1791, I made the tour of the volcano by Sayula, Tuspan, and Colima, without seeing the smallest trace of snow on its summits."

Such is all the information to which we have at present access respecting this important province. Neither Humboldt nor any other modern traveller appears to have visited any part of it, except the small portion between San Blas and Tepic. The capital, the fertile banks of the Santiago, the lake Chapala, the mines of Bolaños, the hot springs of Aguas Calientes, and the volcano of Colima,—all

remain undescribed, and invite the attention of future travellers.—We have still less information with regard to the north-eastern portion of New Gallicia, now comprised in the intendancy of

ZACATECAS.

"THIS singularly ill-peopled province," says our only authority in the present reference, the indefatigable Humboldt, "is a mountainous and arid tract, exposed to a continual inclemency of climate. It is bounded, on the north, by the intendancy of Durango; on the east, by San Luis Potosi; on the south, by Guanaxuato; and on the west, by Guadalaxara. Its greatest length is eighty-five leagues, and its extreme breadth, from Sombrerete to the Real de Ramos, fifty-one leagues; being nearly of the same extent with Switzerland, which it resembles in many geological points of view. The relative population is hardly equal to that of Sweden." The extent of surface is computed to be 2,355 square leagues; the population in 1803, was 153,300, or sixty-five only to the square league. The table-land which forms the centre of the intendancy, and which rises to an elevation of upwards of 6,500 feet, is formed of syenite, on which repose strata of primitive schistus and schistous chlorites; the schistus forms the base of the mountains of trappish porphyry. Zacatecas, the provincial capital, is, next to Guanaxuato, the most celebrated mining-place in New Spain.* Its population is stated by Humboldt to be at least 33,000. The mines of Zacatecas belong to the same groupe as those of

* Situated, according to Major Pike, in lat. 23° N.; long. 104° W. This Traveller estimates the population much higher, but, unfortunately, he does not give his authority.

Guanaxuato and Catorce. The intendancy is divided into four *diputaciones de mineria*, or mining districts: 1. Zacatecas; 2. Sombrerete; 3. Fresnilio; 4. Sierra de Pinos. The *veta negra* of Sombrerete has yielded the greatest wealth of any seam yet discovered in the two hemispheres. To the north of the town of Zacatecas, there are nine small lakes, abounding in muriate and carbonate of soda. The carbonate, which goes by the name of *tequesquite* (corrupted from the Mexican word *tequixquilit*), is of great use in the dissolving of the muriates and sulphurets of silver. "The central table-land of Asia," adds M. Humboldt, "is not richer in soda than Mexico."

To the north of the two intendancies formerly comprised in New Gallicia, lies the province of New Biscay, which, under the distribution of the country into intendancies, is called from its chief town,

DURANGO.

This intendancy, which, together with Sonora and New Mexico, formed the captaincy of the interior provinces of the west, extends, according to Humboldt, from lat. 23° 55′ to 29° 5′ N., and from long. 104° 40′ to 110° 0′ W.* It is bounded, on the west, by Sonora; on the south-east, it touches on San Luis Potosi; but towards the north and east, for upwards of 200 leagues, it borders on an uncultivated country, inhabited by warlike and independent Indians. It comprehends the northern extremity of the great table-land of Anahuac. Its length from north to south, from the cele-

* Major Pike makes New Biscay to lie between lat. 24° and 33°, and long. 105° and 111°: he states its length from N.W. to S.E. at 600 miles; its greatest breadth at 400; and its population at 200,000.

brated mines of Guarisamey to the mountains of Carcay, is 232 leagues: its breadth is very unequal, and, near Parral, is scarcely fifty-eight leagues. Its extent of surface is greater than that of the three united kingdoms of Great Britain, and yet, its total population does not equal that of Birmingham and Manchester united. The number of inhabitants in 1803, was computed to be rather less than 160,000. Of these, Major Pike thinks, three-twentieths might be European Whites, five-twentieths Creoles, five-twentieths Mestizoes and half-castes, and seven-twentieths Indians. It comprises, besides the city of Durango, six towns (*villas*); 199 villages (*pueblos*); 75 parishes (*paroquias*); 152 *haciendas*; 37 missions; and 400 cottages (*ranchos*).

Durango, or Guadiana, the principal city, is the residence of the intendant and of a bishop. It is situated in the most southern part of the province, (in lat. 25° N., and long. 107° W.)* at 170 leagues distance, in a straight line, from the city of Mexico, and 289 leagues from the town of Santa Fé, in New Mexico. The elevation of the town above the sea-level, is 6,800 feet; there are frequent falls of snow, and the thermometer descends to 14° Fahrenheit below the freezing point. The city was founded in 1559: the population in 1803, was 12,000.†

* Pike, p. 352.

† Major Pike says, 40,000. He states, also, that the city is infested, in a very remarkable manner, by scorpions. "They come out of the walls and crevices in May, and continue for about a fortnight in such numbers, that the inhabitants never walk in their houses after dark without a light, and always shift or examine the bed-clothes, and beat the curtains, previously to going to rest; after which, the curtains are secured under the bed.

In the midst of a very level plain, between this city, the plantations *del Ojo* and *del Chorro*, and the town of *Nombre de Dios*, which lies in the road to the famous mines of Sombrerete,—there rises a singular groupe of rocks, of a very grotesque form, covered with scoria, called *la Breña*: they extend twelve leagues from north to south, and six from east to west, and appear to be a volcanic production, consisting of basaltic amygdaloid. On the summit of one of the neighbouring mountains (the *Frayle*), is found a crater above 300 feet in circumference and 100 feet in perpendicular depth. In the environs of Durango, there is also to be found, insulated in the plain, an enormous mass of malleable iron and nickel, said to weigh upwards of 40,000 lb. avoirdupois, and corresponding, in its composition, to the *aërolithos* which fell, in 1751, near Agram in Hungary.* Major Pike mentions "a mountain or hill of loadstone," about 100 miles south of Chihuahua, which had been surveyed by a friend of his; referring, probably, to the same phenomenon.

Chihuahua, the residence of the captain-general of the western interior provinces, was founded in 1691, and is situated in lat. 29° N.; long. 107° 30′ W. Its population is estimated by Humboldt at 11,600; by Major Pike at 7,000. The town is thus described by the latter Traveller: "It is of an oblong rectangular

The precautions are similar to those we take with our moschetto curtains. The bite of these scorpions has been known to prove mortal in two hours. But the most extraordinary circumstance is, that, by taking them ten leagues from Durango, they become perfectly harmless, and lose all their venomous qualities. Query, does this arise from a change of air or of sustenance?" The reader will probably be of opinion, that there is a previous query which requires to be disposed of. Yet, as Mexico has its stingless bees, it may possibly have its impotent scorpions.

* Humboldt, Pol. Essay, vol. ii. p. 245.

form, on the eastern side of a small stream, which discharges itself into the river Conchos. At its southern extremity is a small but elegant church. In the public square stands the church, the royal treasury, the town-house, and the richest shops. At the western extremity, there is another church for the military, a superb hospital, belonging formerly to the Jesuits, the churches of the monks of St. Francis and St. Dominick, the military academy, and the barracks (*quartel del tropa*). On the north-west are two or three missions, very handsomely situated on a small stream which comes in from the west. About one mile to the south of the town is a large aqueduct, which conveys the water round it, to the east, into the main stream below the town, at the centre of which is a reservoir, whence the water is conducted by pipes to the different parts of the city; and in the public square is to be a fountain and *jet d'eau*. The principal church is the most superb building we saw in New Spain; its whole front being covered with statues of the apostles and the different saints, set in niches, and the windows, doors, &c. ornamented with sculpture. I was never within the doors, but was informed that the decorations are immensely rich. Some men whom we supposed to be entitled to credit, informed us, that the church was built by a tax of 12½ *cents* laid on each ingot of gold or silver taken out of the mines in the vicinity. Its cost, including the decorations, was 1,500,000 dollars; and when it was finished, there remained 300,000 dollars of the fund unappropriated. On the south side of Chihuahua is the public walk, formed by three rows of trees, whose branches nearly meet over the heads of the passengers. At different distances there are seats, and, at each end of the walk, circular seats, on which,

in the evening, the company collected and amused themselves with the guitar, and songs in Spanish, Italian, and French, adapted to the voluptuous manners of the country. In this city, as well as in all others of any consideration, there are patroles of soldiers during the night, who stop every person at nine o'clock, and examine them. My countersign was, *Americans.*

"There are at Chihuahua and its vicinity, fifteen mines; thirteen of silver, one of gold, and one of copper; the furnaces for all of which are situated round the town, in the suburbs, and present, except on Sundays, volumes of smoke rising in every direction, which are seen from a distance long before the spires of the city strike the view. It is incredible, the quantity of cinders that surround the city, in piles ten or fifteen feet high. Next the creek, they have formed a bank of them, to check the encroachments of the stream, and it has presented an effectual barrier. I am told, that a European employed some hands, and wrought at the cinders, and that they yielded 1 dollar 25 cents for each per day; but this not answering his expectations, he ceased his proceedings. At Mauperne, there are one gold and seven silver mines."*

The mines of Chihuahua lie to the east of the great *real* of *Santa Rosa de Cosiguiriachi*, situated at the foot of the sierra *de los Metates*. The population of Cosiguiriachi is said to amount to nearly 11,000 souls. To the west of the Rio de Conchos is the town and *real* of *San Pedro de Batopilas*, with a population of 8,000, which was formerly celebrated for the great wealth of its mines. To the same rich groupe (the third in Humboldt's enumeration, and the most

* Pike's Exploratory Travels, p. 352.

northern in Mexico, extending from lat. 26° 50′ to 29° 10′ N.; and from long. 106° 45′ to 108° 50′ W.) belongs the *real* of *San José de Parral*, situated to the south of Chihuahua, and the residence of a deputation of mines: the population is stated at 5,000. This *real*, as well as the town of Parras, received its name from the great number of wild vine-shoots with which the country was covered on the first arrival of the Spaniards. A fifth mining district within this intendancy, is that of *Guarisamey*, a very old *real*, on the road from Durango to Copala, with a population of 3,800. It belongs to the groupe of Durango and Sonora, ranked by Humboldt as the second in point of actual produce; extending from lat. 23° to 24° 45′ N., and from long. 106° 30′ to 109° 50′ W.

The other chief places in this intendancy, according to Humboldt, are, *San Juan del Rio*, to the S.W. of the lake of Parras, population 10,200; *Nombre de Dios*, population 6,800; *Pasquiaro*, a small town to the S. of the Rio de Nasas, with a population of 5,600; *Mapimis*, a military post (*presidio*), to the east of the *Cerro de la Cadena*, on the confines of the *Bolson de Mapimi*,—population, 2,400; *Saltillo*, on the confines of Cohahuila and Leon, in the midst of arid plains, towards the eastern declivity of the table-land, the population 6,000; and *Parras*, near the lake of the same name, west of Saltillo. The last two towns are included by Major Pike in the province of Cohahuila, and have already been noticed. The same Traveller mentions, as one of the chief places of Durango, "*Pollalein*, situated at the foot of the *Sierra Madre*, and supposed to contain 25,000 souls." No such place is mentioned by Humboldt, and it is probably a mistake for *Parral*, the population being overrated. The river Conchos, the largest in the province, has its

source, according to the American Traveller, in the *Sierra Madre*, near Batopilas, in lat. 28° N.: after a course of about 300 miles, during which it receives the *Rio Florida* from the east, and the *Rio San Pablo* from the west, it joins the great *Rio del Norte* in lat. 31°. The *Rio San Pablo*, the large western branch of the Conchos, has its head in lat. 28° 50′, and after a course of about 150 miles, discharges into the latter at Bakinao: in summer, it is nearly dry; in the rainy season, impassable. The *Rio Florida* takes its rise in lat. 26° 30′ N., and has a course of similar length: about mid-way on its eastern bank, is situated the *presidio* of Guaxequillo. The *Rio de Nasas* forms in part the line between New Biscay and Cohahuila: it runs north, and empties itself into the lake Cayman on the borders of the *Bolson de Mapimi*. This stream is also nearly dry in summer, but, at some periods, impassable. Lake Cayman and lake Parras, situated at the feet of the mountains, are both full of fish.

The climate of this intendancy is stated by Major Pike to be dry, and the heat, at that time of year which precedes the rainy season, very great. The rains commence in June, and continue, by light showers, till September. During the remainder of the year, there falls neither rain nor snow to moisten the earth, and the atmosphere becomes highly electrified.* The agricultural produce consists of wheat, maize,

* "The atmosphere had become so electrified, that, when we halted at night, in taking off our blankets, the electric fluid would almost cover them with sparks; and in Chihuahua, we prepared a bottle with gold leaf as a receiver, and collected sufficient fluid from a bear-skin to give a considerable shock to a number of persons. This phenomenon was more conspicuous in the vicinity of Chihuahua, than in any other part that we crossed."—PIKE, p. 348.

rice, oats, cotton, flax, indigo, and the fruit of the vine. To the north of Chihuahua, about thirty miles to the right of the main road, there is some pine-timber; in one place, near a spring, Major Pike noticed a solitary walnut-tree; and on all the small streams, there are, he says, shrubby cotton-trees. "With these few exceptions, the whole province is a naked, barren plain, which presents to the eye an arid, unproductive soil; and more especially in the neighbourhood of mines, even the herbage appears to be poisoned by the qualities of the land." New Biscay trades both with the southern provinces and with New Mexico and Sonora, furnishing to the more populous parts of the kingdom a great number of horses, mules, beeves, sheep, and goats, in return for dry goods, European furniture, ammunition, books, &c., which are brought from the capital on mules. "Some individuals make large fortunes by being the carriers from Mexico to Chihuahua, the freight being eight dollars per cent; and they generally put 300 lb. on each mule. The merchants make their remittances twice a year in bullion. Goods sell at Chihuahua about 200 *per cent* higher than the prices of our Atlantic sea-port towns.* They manufacture some few arms, blankets, stamped leather, embroidery, coarse cotton and woollen cloths, and a species of carpeting." This Traveller concludes his statistical account of the province by stating, that law here is merely a shadow, the only laws that can be said to be in force being the military and the ecclesiastical; that the corruption of morals is general,—the natural concomitant of a great degree of luxury among the rich,

* This was in 1807. Horses then averaged at 6 dollars; some would fetch 100 dollars; trained mules, 20 dollars; rice sold for 4 dollars the cwt.

and of misery among the poor; that the Roman Catholic religion is in full force, but the inferior clergy are much dissatisfied.

There are no slaves in this province, nor any Indians of the Aztec race;—Humboldt says, not a single tributary individual, and "all the inhabitants are either white, or consider themselves as such." Major Pike explains the state of things more specifically. Except the Apaches, who inhabit the *Bolson de Mapimi*, there are, he says, no uncivilised savages in this province. "The Christian Indians are so incorporated amongst the lower grades of Mestizoes, that it is scarcely possible to draw the line of distinction, except at the *ranchos* of some nobleman or large landholder, where they are in a state of vassalage. This class of people laid a conspiracy, which was so well concerted as to baffle the research of the Spaniards for a length of time, and to occasion them the loss of several hundreds of the inhabitants. The Indians used to go out from their villages in small parties: in a short time, a part would return with a report that they had been attacked by the Indians. The Spaniards would immediately send out a detachment in pursuit, when they were led into an ambuscade, and every soul cut off. They pursued this course so long, that the whole province became alarmed at the rapid manner in which their enemies multiplied; but some circumstances leading to a suspicion, they made use of the superstition of these people for their ruin. Some officers disguised themselves like friars, and went round amongst the Indians, pretending to be possessed of the spirit of prophecy. They preached up to them, that the day was approaching when a general deliverance from the Spanish tyranny was about to take place, and invited the Indians to join with them in

promoting the work of God. The poor creatures came forward, and, in their confessions, stated the great hand that had already been put to the work. After they had ascertained the nature and extent of the conspiracy, and obtained a body of troops, they commenced the execution, and put to death about four hundred of them. This struck terror and dismay throughout the Indian villages, and they durst not rise to support their freedom and independence."

To the west of New Biscay, lies the intendancy of

SONORA,

Comprehending the three provinces of Cinaloa (or Sinaloa), Ostimury, and Sonora Proper. The first extends from the *Rio del Rosario* to the *Rio del Fuerte* (from lat. 23° to 26° 45′); the second, from the *Rio del Fuerte* to the *Rio del Mayo* (in lat. 27° 30′); and the third (called in some old maps, New Navarre) comprises all the northern part of the intendancy. Its northern limits are very uncertain. The villages of the district of *Pimeria alta* are separated from the banks of the *Rio Gila*, by a region inhabited by independent Indians, of whom neither the soldiers stationed in the *presidios*, nor the monks posted in the neighbouring missions, have been hitherto able to effect the conquest. On the west, this intendancy has more than 280 leagues of coast extending along the Sea of Cortes, usually called the Gulf of California. On the south, Sinaloa is bounded by Guadalaxara and the ocean. Its breadth varies from 50 leagues (its greatest breadth below the 27th parallel) to upwards of 128 leagues. Its extent in square leagues is computed to be rather more than 19,000; and the popu-

lation in 1803, was 121,400, or *six* inhabitants only to the square league.

The province of Sinaloa was the first peopled. Major Pike estimates its population at 60,000, " not more than three-twentieths of whom are Spaniards; the remainder, Creoles, Mestizoes, and Indians." In 1793, the number of tributary Indians in this province was 1,851. The country presents much the same aspect as that of New Biscay,—bare, destitute of timber, and hilly; the air dry, pure, and salubrious, except along the coast, where the ground is marshy, the soil rich, and the atmosphere humid. It contains 5 towns, 92 villages, 30 parishes, 14 *haciendas*, and 450 *ranchos*. Sinaloa, the head town, called also the *Villa de San Felipe y Santiago*, is situated to the east of the port of *Santa Maria d'Aome:* its population is estimated at 9,500. *Culiacan* (" celebrated in the history of Mexico under the name of *Hueicolhuacan*") contains a population of 10,800. *El Rosario*, near the rich mines of Copala, has 5,600; *Villa del Fuerte*, or *Montesclaros*, to the north of Sinaloa, 7,900.

Los Alamos, between the *Rio del Fuerte* and the *Rio Mayo*, the residence of a deputation of mines, is in the district of *Ostimury*, or *Hostimuri*. It contains about 8,000 inhabitants. Ostimury itself is a small but populous town, surrounded with considerable mines.* From the port of Guitivis at the mouth of the *Rio Mayo*, the public courier or post from Mexico

* We have followed Humboldt, in the absence of better information; but in his map, the town or *real* of Hostimuri is placed on the *north* side of the river Mayo, between which and the river Fuerte he describes the province of Ostimury as lying. After stating, moreover, that the intendancy comprises the three provinces of Cinaloa, Ostimury, and Sonora Proper, he takes no further notice of the second of these divisions, but subsequently divides the intendancy into the two provinces of Sonora and Cinaloa.

embarks in a *lancha* for Loreto in Old California, whence letters are sent from mission to mission as far as Monterey and the port of San Francisco, in New California, under the parallel of 37° 48′.

The chief places in Sonora Proper, are, *Arispe*, the capital of the intendancy, situated near the head of the river Yaqui, in lat. 31° N., long. 111° W., the population 7,600; *Sonora*, S. of Arispe, population 6,400; and *Terrenate*, or *Ternate*, a *presidio* to the N. of the capital. Arispe, Major Pike says, "is celebrated throughout the kingdom for the vast quantity of gold table utensils made use of in the houses, and for the urbanity and hospitality of the inhabitants." He makes the population amount only to 3,400, or less than half Humboldt's estimate, but whether on the authority of a more recent *census* or not, does not appear. Little is known with any degree of certainty or precision of these remote regions. Even the mines are too distant to attract or to repay attention. Yet, the proportion of gold which they yield, is so considerable, that gold does not preserve its usual exchange with silver in this province. General Salcedo told Capt. Pike, that the largest piece of pure gold ever discovered in New Spain, was found in this province, and it had been sent to Madrid to be put in his majesty's cabinet of curiosities.* Sonora trades with New Mexico, Durango, and the southern provinces, either by land, or through the Californian Gulf.

* All the ravines and even plains of the hilly country of the *Primeria alta*, Humboldt states, contain gold scattered up and down the alluvial land. Masses of pure gold, of the weight of from 5 to 8 lb. troy, have been found there. But these gold-washings are by no means diligently sought after, on account of the frequent incursions of the Indians, and especially on account of the high price of provisions, which must be brought from a great distance in this uncultivated country.

It is celebrated for cheese, horses, and sheep. Like New Biscay, the province is destitute of timber, but has some rich soil near the sea. It abounds with deer, *cabrie*, bears, and "remarkably large Guana lizards, which are said to weigh ten pounds, are perfectly harmless, and are trained by the inhabitants to catch mice." *

The most northern part of this intendancy bears the name of *Pimeria*, on account of a numerous tribe of *Pimas* Indians who inhabit it. These Indians live for the most part under the domination of the missionary monks, and observe the Romish ritual. This district is divided into the *Pimeria alta* and the *Pimeria baxa*; the latter containing the *presidio* of Buenavista, and the former extending from the *presidio* of Ternate to the *Rio Gila*. Here the traveller has reached the confines of civilised society. "Hitherto," says Humboldt, "there has been no permanent communication established between Sonora, New Mexico, and New California, although the Court of Madrid has frequently given orders for the formation of *presidios* and missions between the *Rio Gila* and the *Rio Colorado*. Two courageous and enterprising monks, Fathers Garces and Font, succeeded, however, in penetrating by land through the countries inhabited by independent Indians, from the missions of the *Pimeria alta*, to Monterey and the port of St. Francisco, without crossing the peninsula of Old California. This bold enterprise, on which the college of the Propaganda at Queretaro published an interesting notice, has also furnished new information relative to the ruins of *la Casa grande*, considered by the Mexican historians as the abode of the Aztecs on their arrival

* Pike, p. 358.

at the *Rio Gila* towards the end of the twelfth century. Father Francisco Garces, accompanied by Father Font, who was entrusted with the observations of the latitude, set out from the *presidio* of Horcasitas on the 20th April, 1773. After a journey of eleven days, they arrived at a vast and beautiful plain one league's distance from the southern bank of the Rio Gila. They there discovered the ruins of an ancient Aztec city, in the midst of which is the edifice called *la Casa grande*. These ruins occupy more than a square league. The *Casa grande* is exactly laid down according to the four cardinal points, having from north to south 445 feet in length, and from east to west 276 feet in breadth. It is constructed of clay (or unburnt bricks) of unequal size, but symmetrically placed. The walls are nearly four feet thick. The edifice had three stories and a terrace; the stair, probably of wood, was on the outside. The same kind of construction is still to be found in all the villages of the independent Indians of the Moqui, west of New Mexico. We perceive in the *Casa grande* five apartments, each of which is about 27 feet in length, 10 in breadth, and 11 in height. A wall, interrupted by large towers, surrounds the principal edifice, and appears to have served to defend it. Father Garces discovered the vestiges of an artificial canal, which brought the water of the *Rio Gila* to the town. The whole surrounding plain is covered with broken earthen pitchers and pots, prettily painted in white, red, and blue. We also find among these fragments of Mexican earthenware, pieces of obsidian (*itzli*); a very curious phenomenon, because it proves that the Aztecs passed through some unknown northern country which contains this volcanic substance, and that it was not the abundance of obsidian in New Spain, that

suggested the idea of razors and instruments of *itzli*. We must not, however, confound the ruins of this city of the Gila, the centre of an ancient civilisation, with the *casas grandes* of New Biscay, situated between the *presidio* of Yanos and that of San Buenaventura. The latter are pointed out by the natives, on the very vague supposition, that the Aztec nation, in their migration from Aztlan to Tula and the valley of Tenochtitlan, made three stations: the first, near the lake Teguyo, to the south of the fabulous city of Quivira, the Mexican Dorado; the second at the Rio Gila; and the third, in the environs of Yanos.

"The Indians who live in the plains adjoining the *Casas grandes* of the *Rio Gila*, and who have never had the smallest communication with the inhabitants of Sonora, deserve by no means the appellation of *Indios bravos* (savages). Their social civilisation forms a singular contrast with the state of the savages who wander along the banks of the Missouri. Fathers Garces and Font found the Indians to the south of the *Rio Gila* clothed, and assembled together, to the number of two or three thousand, in villages, which they called Uturicut and Sutaquisan, where they peaceably cultivated the soil. They saw fields sown with maize, cotton, and gourds. The missionaries, in order to bring about the conversion of these Indians, shewed them a picture painted on a large piece of cotton cloth, in which a sinner was represented burning in the flames of hell. The picture terrified them; and they entreated Father Garces not to unroll it any more, nor speak to them of what would happen after death. These Indians are of a gentle and sincere character. Father Font explained to them by an interpreter, the security which prevailed in the Chris-

tian missions, where an Indian alcalde administered justice. The chief of Uturicut replied: 'This order of things may be necessary for you: we do not steal, and we very seldom disagree; what use have we then for an alcalde among us?' The civilisation to be found among the Indians when we approach the north-west coast of America, from the 33d to the 54th parallel, is a very striking phenomenon, which cannot but throw some light on the history of the first migrations of the Mexican nations."

As Father Font is stated to have conversed with these Indians by means of an interpreter, either some of them must have had communication with the whites, or they must speak a dialect intelligible to the more southern tribes. On this point, however, the "seraphic chronicle" which contains the account of this expedition, appears to be silent, although of material importance in determining their affinity to the Aztec tribes. The whole statement rests for the present on the testimony of the two monks, who, though there is no reason to doubt their veracity, appear to have discovered much more zeal, than knowledge or good sense, in their attempts at conversion. The condition of these Indians of the *Rio Gila* will deserve to be investigated by future travellers.

Still further north, in the country of the Moqui, watered by the *Rio de Yaquesila*, in lat. 36°, Father Garces "was astonished to find an Indian town with two great squares, houses of several stories, and streets well laid out in parallel directions. Every evening, the people assemble together on the terraces which form the roofs. The construction of the edifices is the same as that of the *casas grandes* on the banks of the *Rio Gila*. The Indians who inhabit the northern part of New Mexico, give also a considerable elevation

to their houses, for the sake of discovering the approach of their enemies. "Every thing in these countries," adds Humboldt, "appears to announce traces of the civilisation of the ancient Mexicans. However, the language spoken by the Indians of the Moqui, the Yabipais, who wear long beards, and those who inhabit the plains in the vicinity of the *Rio Colorado*, is essentially different from the Mexican language. In the seventeenth century, several Franciscan missionaries established themselves among the Indians of the Moqui and Nabajoa, who were massacred in the great revolt of the Indians in 1680. I have seen, in manuscript maps drawn up before that period, the name of the *provincia del Moqui*."

We now enter on what may be considered as the Siberia of Mexico, the province of

NEW MEXICO.

When the town of Durango, in New Biscay, was founded, under the administration of the second viceroy of New Spain, Velasco el Primero, in 1559, it was then a military post against the incursions of the Chichimec Indians. Thirty-five years after this, in the year 1594, two friars came from the southern provinces into New Mexico, where they were well received by the Indians. They returned, and in the ensuing year, Juan de Ouate, a monk, was sent out by the viceroy, Count de Monterey, to explore the country. On his return, 1,000 troops, and 500 men, women, and children, were sent to form a settlement on the *Rio del Norte*, at no very great distance from where Santa Fé now stands. They are stated to have entered into an amicable arrangement with the Indians respecting this establishment; but, a few

years after, the natives rose *en masse*, and fell on the new settlers by surprise, killing most of the soldiers, and obliging them to retreat to the *Passo del Norte*, which acquired its name from this circumstance. Here they waited for a reinforcement from New Biscay, on the arrival of which with two field-pieces, they returned and laid siege to the Indian town on the site of Santa Fé. The natives held out for twenty-two days, after which they entered into a second negotiation, which appears to have been a compromise, rather than a conquest, on the part of the besiegers. Since that time, the settlements have been on several occasions on the point of ruin, and have been maintained only by means of reinforcements from Durango and Sonora. "It is remarkable," Humboldt observes, "that after the lapse of two centuries of colonisation, the province of New Mexico does not yet join the intendancy of New Biscay. The two provinces are separated by a desert, in which travellers are sometimes attacked by the Cumanches Indians. This desert extends from the *Passo del Norte* towards the town of Albuquerque. Before 1680, in which year there was a general revolt among the Indians of New Mexico, this extent of uncultivated and uninhabited country was much less considerable than it is now. There were then three villages, San Pascual, Semillete, and Socorro, which were situated between the marsh of the *Muerto* and the town of Santa Fé. Bishop Tamaron perceived the ruins of them in 1760; and he found apricots growing wild in the fields, an indication of the former cultivation of the country. The two most dangerous points for travellers are, the defile of *Robledo*, west from the *Rio del Norte*, opposite the *Sierra de Doña Ana*, and the desert of the *Muerto*, where many

whites have been assassinated by wandering Indians. The desert of the *Muerto* is a plain thirty leagues in length, destitute of water. The general character of this country throughout, is an alarming aridity; for the mountains *de los Mansos*, situated to the east of the road from Durango to Santa Fé, do not give rise to a single brook. Notwithstanding the mildness of the climate, and the progress of industry, a great part of this province, as well as Old California, and several districts of New Biscay, and the intendancy of Guadalaxara, will never admit of any considerable population.

"The colonists of this province, known for their great energy of character, live in a state of perpetual warfare with the neighbouring Indians. It is on account of this insecurity of the country life, that we find the towns more populous than we should expect in so desert a country. The situation of the inhabitants of New Mexico bears, in many respects, a great resemblance to that of the people of Europe during the middle ages. So long as insulation exposes men to personal danger, we can hope for the establishment of no equilibrium between the population of towns and that of the country. However, the Indians, who live on an intimate footing with the Spanish colonists, are by no means all equally barbarous. Those of the east are warlike, and wander about from place to place. If they carry on any commerce with the whites, it is frequently without any personal intercourse, and according to principles, of which some traces are to be found among some of the tribes of Africa. The savages, in their excursions to the north of the *Bolson de Mapimi*, plant along the road between Chihuahua and Santa Fé, small crosses, to which they suspend a leathern pocket,

with a piece of stag-flesh. At the foot of the cross, a buffalo's hide is stretched out. The Indian indicates by these signs, that he wishes to carry on a commerce of barter with those who adore the cross. He offers the Christian traveller a hide for provisions, of which he does not fix the quantity. The soldiers of the *presidios*, who understand the hieroglyphical language of the Indians, take away the buffalo hide, and leave some salted flesh at the foot of the cross. This system of commerce indicates at once an extraordinary mixture of good faith and distrust."

The more specific account which Major Pike gives of the aborigines, throws further light on the causes of this hostility of the natives. The sources of the *Rio del Norte* are the haunt of the Utahs, who speak the same language as the Kyaways, who wander about the sources of the Platte river, and the Ietans. These three tribes appear to be assimilated in their habits as well as in their dialect. They possess immense herds of horses, are armed with bows and arrows, and lances, and follow the buffalo. The Utahs are rather more civilised than the others, having more connexion with the Spaniards, with whom, however, they are frequently at war, and at other times with the Ietans. They are supposed to be 2,000 warriors strong. The Nanahaws occupy a district to the N.W. of Sante Fé; they are frequently at war with the Spaniards. Their strength is supposed to be equal to that of the Utahs, and they are armed in the same manner; but they speak, as do all the tribes further west and bordering on California, the language of the Appaches. The Appaches extend from the Black Mountains in New Mexico to the borders of Cohahuila, keeping the frontiers of three provinces in a state of perpetual

alarm, and occasioning nearly 2,000 dragoons to be maintained in constant employment for the protection of the villages, in the escorting of caravans, or in the repelling and avenging of the irruptions continually made into the settlements. "They formerly extended from the entrance of the *Rio Grande* to the Gulf of California, and have waged a continual warfare with the Spaniards, with the exception of short truces, from the time that the latter pushed their conquests into the interior provinces. It is extremely difficult to say what their numbers are at the present day, but they must be very much reduced by their long and constant hostilities, together with the wandering and savage life they lead on the mountains, which is so injurious to an increase of population, and in which they are liable to be extremely pinched by famine. At the commencement of their warfare, the Spaniards used to take them prisoners, and make slaves of them; but, finding that their unconquerable attachment to liberty made them surmount every difficulty and danger to return to their mountains, they adopted the practice of sending them to Cuba. This the Appaches no sooner learned, than they refused to give or to receive quarter; and in no instance have there been any taken since that period, except when surprised asleep, or knocked down and overpowered. Their arms are the bow and arrow, and the lance. The bow forms two semicircles with a shoulder in the middle; the back of it is entirely covered with sinews, which are laid on in so nice a manner, by the use of some glutinous substance, as to be almost imperceptible; this gives great force to the elasticity of the weapon. Their arrow is more than the cloth-yard of the English, being three feet and a half long; the upper part con-

sisting of some slight rush or cane, into which is inserted a shaft of about one foot, made of some hard, seasoned, light wood; the point is of iron, cane, or stone, and when the arrow enters the body, in attempting to extract it, the shaft comes out of its socket, and remains in the wound. With this weapon they shoot with such force, as to pierce through the body of a man at the distance of one hundred yards; and an officer told me, that, in an engagement with them, one of their arrows struck his shield, and dismounted him in an instant. The other weapon of defence is a lance of fifteen feet in length, which with both hands they charge over their heads, managing the horse principally with their knees. With this they are considered as an overmatch for the Spanish dragoons single-handed; but, for want of the tactic, they can never stand the charge of a body that acts in concert: they all have the shield. Some few are armed with guns and ammunition taken from the Spaniards. These, as well as the archers, generally march to war on foot, but the lance-men are always mounted. Numerous are the anecdotes I heard related of their personal bravery, and the spirit of their partisan corps. Not long before I passed through, as a cornet with sixty-three dragoons was passing between New Mexico and Biscay, he was surrounded by about two hundred Appaches infantry; and instead of charging through them, as it was on the plain, he ordered his dragoons to dismount and fight with their carabines, by which means, he with his whole party fell a sacrifice. Malgares related an instance in which, when marching with 140 men, he was attacked by a party of Appaches, both horse and foot, who continued the fight for four hours. Whenever the Spanish dragoons made a general charge, the

Appaches cavalry would retreat behind their infantry, who met the Spaniards with a shower of arrows, on which they immediately retreated; and even the gallant Malgares spoke of his cavalry breaking their infantry as a thing not to be thought of. How quickly would one full squadron of our troops have put them to flight, and cut them to pieces! Malgares assured me, that if the men had seconded the efforts and bravery of the Indian chieftain, they must have been defeated and cut to pieces; that in various instances he rallied his men, and brought them up to the charge, and when they flew, retired indignantly in the rear. Seeing Malgares very actively engaged in forming and bringing up the men, he rode out a-head of his party, and challenged him to single combat with his lance. This my friend refused, as, he said, the chief was one of the stoutest men he knew, carried a remarkably heavy lance, and rode a very fine charger; but one of his corporals, enraged to see them thus braved by the savage, begged permission to meet the "infidel." His officer refused his request, and ordered him to keep his ranks; but, on his reiterating his request, his superior in a passion told him to go. The Indian chief had turned his horse to join his party: on seeing his enemy advancing, he returned, and giving a shout, met him at full speed. The dragoon thought to parry the lance of his antagonist, which he in part effected, but not throwing it quite high enough, it entered his neck in front, and came out at the nape, when he fell dead to the ground, and his victorious enemy gave a shout, in which he was joined by all his followers. This enraged the Spaniards to such a degree, that they made a general charge, on which the Indian

cavalry again retreated, notwithstanding the entreaties of their gallant leader.

"In another instance, a small smoke was discovered on the prairie, and three poor savages were surrounded by 100 dragoons, and ordered to lay down their arms. They smiled at the officer's demand, and asked him if he could suppose, that men who had arms in their hands, would ever consent to become slaves. He being loath to kill them, held a conference for an hour, when, finding that his threats had as little effect as his entreaties, he ordered his men to attack them at a distance, keeping out of the reach of their arrows, and firing at them with their carabines, which they did, the Indians never ceasing to resist as long as life remained. Once, during a truce, a captain was ordered to treat with some of the bands. He received their deputies with hauteur, and they could not come to terms; the truce was broken, and the Indians retreated to their fastnesses in the mountains. In a day or two this same officer pursued them. They were in a place called the 'Door in the Mountains,' where only two or three dragoons could enter at a time, and there were rocks and caves on the flanks. Between these the Indians secreted themselves, until a number of the Spaniards had come in; when the Indians sounded a trumpet, and the attack began, and continued on the side of the Appaches until the captain fell: the Indian chief then caused the firing to cease, saying, that 'the man who had so haughtily spurned the proffered peace, was now dead.' They made prisoner (for once) a young officer, who during the truce had treated them with great kindness, and sent him home safe and unhurt.

"Some of the bands have made temporary truces

with the Spaniards, and received from them 25 *cents* per diem each. These people hover round the fortifications of the country, drink, shoot, and dissipate their time; they are haughty and independent, and great jealousy exists between them and the Spaniards. Those savages who have for some time lived near the forts and villages, become, when hostile, by far the most dangerous enemies the Spaniards have, as they acquire the Spanish language, manners, and habits, and passing through the populated parts under the disguise of civilised and friendly Indians, commit murders and robberies without being suspected. There is in the province of Cohahuila, a partisan named Ralph, who, it is calculated, has killed more than 300 persons. He comes into the town under the disguise of a peasant, buys provisions, goes to the gambling-tables and to mass, and, before he leaves the village, is sure to kill some person, or to carry off a woman, which he has frequently done. Sometimes he joins travellers on the road, insinuates himself into their confidence, and takes his opportunity to assassinate them. He has only six followers; yet, from their knowledge of the country, their activity and cunning, he keeps about 300 dragoons continually employed. The government has offered 1,000 dollars for his head.

"The civilised Indians of the province of New Mexico consist of what were formerly twenty-four different bands, the several names of which I was not able to learn. The *Keres* were one of the most powerful: they form at present the population of San Domingo, San Felipe, San Dies, and one or two other towns. They are men of large stature, with round, full visage, and fine teeth, and appear to be of a gentle, tractable disposition: they resemble the Osages more

than any nation within my knowledge. Although they are not the vassals of individuals, yet, they may properly be termed the slaves of the state; for they are compelled to do military duty, drive mules, carry loads, or, in fact, perform any other act of duty or bondage that the commandant of the district, or any other passing military tyrant, may choose to ordain. I was myself eye-witness of a scene which made my heart bleed for these poor wretches, at the same time that it excited my indignation and contempt that they should suffer themselves, with arms in their hands, to be beaten and knocked about by beings in no respect their superiors, unless a slight tint of complexion could be supposed to give that superiority. Before we arrived at Santa Fé, we rested one night near one of the villages, where resided the families of two of our horsemen. They took the liberty to pay them a visit in the night. Next morning the whole party were called up, and because they refused to testify against their imprudent companions, several were knocked down from their horses by the Spanish dragoons with the butt end of their lances. Yet, with the blood streaking their faces, and arms in their hands, they stood cool and tranquil. Not a frown, not a word of discontent or of palliation escaped them. Yet, what must have been the boiling indignation of their souls at the insults offered by the wretch clothed with a little brief authority! But the day of retribution will come in thunder and in vengeance.

"These savages are armed with bows and arrows, and lances, or escopates. Although they are said to be converted to Christianity, they still retain many of their ancient superstitious feasts and ceremonies. Once a year there is a great festival, which lasts

three successive days, spent in eating, drinking, and dancing. The nocturnal revels have a great affinity to the ancient mystic rites of Greece." *

The province of New Mexico extends along the *Rio del Norte*, from lat. 31° to 38°, being about 175 leagues in length, and varying from 30 to 50 leagues in breadth.† But, in this space, there is a desert of more than 250 miles. The population in 1803, was estimated at 40,000 souls, or seven persons to every square league. It is bounded on the north and east, by Louisiana; on the south, by Durango and Cohahuila; and on the west, by Sonora and California. Although under the same latitude as Syria and central Persia, it has a remarkably cold climate: it freezes in the middle of May. Near Santa Fé, and a little further north, the *Rio del Norte* is sometimes covered for a succession of years with ice thick enough to allow of the passing of horses and carriages. The mountains which bound the basin of the *Rio del Norte*, and even those at the foot of which the village of Taos is situated, lose their snow towards the beginning of June.‡ "No persons," says Captain

* Pike's Travels, pp. 337—43. This Traveller represents this festival as being held near a dark cave, which is made the scene of the infamous practices alluded to. There is no reason whatever to doubt, that this was the account he received; but it agrees so little with the character of the Indian superstitions, their manners, or their physical temperament, that, in the absence of more specific information, it must be regarded as improbable. If substantiated, the coincidence would be most remarkable.

† Humboldt.—Major Pike says, from lat. 31° 30′ to 37°, and between 104° and 108° W. long.; but the inhabited part is not more than 400 miles in length and 50 in breadth.

‡ From this circumstance, Humboldt infers, that the elevation of the valley above the sea level is not great: he supposes the bed of the river, under 37° N. lat., not to be more than from 2,300 to

Pike, "accustomed to reside in the temperate climate of the 36th and 37th parallels of north latitude in the United States, can form any idea of the piercing cold experienced in that latitude in New Mexico. But the air is serene, not subject to damps or fogs, as it rains but once a year, and some years not at all. It is a mountainous country; and the grand dividing ridges which separate the waters of the *Rio del Norte* from those of California, bordering it on the line of its western limits, give a keenness to the air which would never be calculated on in a temperate zone. The cotton-tree is the sole production of this province, except some scrubby pines and cedars at the foot of the mountains. The former tree borders the banks of the *Rio del Norte* and its tributary streams.* All the rest of the country presents to the eye a barren wild of poor land, scarcely to be improved by culture, and appears capable only of producing a scanty subsistence for the animals, which live on a few succulent plants and herbage. There are no mines known in the province, except one of copper, situated in a mountain on the western side of the *Rio del Norte*, in lat. 34° N. It is wrought, and produces 20,000 mule-loads of copper annually, furnishing that article for the manufactories of nearly all the internal provinces. It contains gold, but not in sufficient quantity to pay for its extraction. There is, near Santa Fé, in some of the mountains, a stratum of talc, which admits of being divided into thin flakes, of which are made the windows of most of the houses

2,600 feet above the ocean. Captain Pike represents the western mountains as "covered in some places with eternal snows," but he was probably misinformed.

* Humboldt says, "The banks of the river are extremely picturesque, and are adorned with beautiful poplars and other trees."

in Santa Fé and all the villages to the north. New Mexico carries on a trade direct with Mexico and Biscay, and with Sonora. It sends out annually about 30,000 sheep; also, dressed deer-skins and cabrie-skins, some fur, buffalo robes, tobacco, salt, and wrought copper vessels of a superior quality. It receives in return from New Biscay and Mexico, dry goods, confectionary, arms, iron, steel, ammunition, European wines and liquors; from Sonora, gold, silver, and cheese.* The journey with loaded mules from Santa Fé to Mexico, and returning, takes five months. They manufacture rough leather, segars, a vast variety and quantity of potter's ware, cotton, some coarse woollen cloths, and blankets of a superior quality. All these manufactures are carried on by the civilised Indians, as the Spaniards think it more honourable to be agriculturists than mechanics. The Indians, likewise, far excel their conquerors in all mechanical operations. They cultivate maize, wheat, rye, barley, rice, and all the culinary plants of the same latitude in the United States; but they are at least a century behind us in the art of cultivation: notwithstanding the numerous herds of cattle and horses, I have frequently seen them breaking up whole fields with the hoe. Their oxen draw by the horns, after the French (and Spanish) mode. Their carts are extremely awkward and clumsily made. During the whole of the time we were in the country, I never saw a horse in a vehicle of any description,

* As instances of the extreme dearness of goods and cheapness of produce, the Writer mentions the following prices: flour, 2 dollars per 100; salt, 5 dollars per mule-load; sheep, 1 dollar each; beeves, 5 dollars each; horses, 11 dollars each; mules, 30 dollars each:—fine cloths, 20 dollars per yard; superfine cloths, 25 dollars; linen, 4 dollars; and dry goods in proportion.

mules being made use of in carriages, as well as for the purpose of labour. New Mexico has the exclusive right of cultivating tobacco.* The animals found in this province are, deer, elk, buffalo, cabrie, the grisly black bear, and wild horses."†

This province contains three towns; *Santa Fé*, the capital, *Santa Cruz de la Cañada y Taos*, and *Albuquerque y Alameda:* besides these, they reckon twenty-six *pueblos*, three parishes, and nineteen missions. The *presidio* of *Passo del Norte*, however, is a considerable town, the most southern in the province. It is situated on the right bank of the *Rio del Norte*, above sixty leagues south of Santa Fé, in a "delicious" country, resembling (Humboldt says) the finest parts of Andalusia. The gardens contain in abundance all the fruits of Europe; figs, peaches, apples, and pears. The fields are cultivated with maize and wheat, and the vineyards produce excellent sweet wines, which are preferred even to those of Parras, in New Biscay. As the country is dry, a canal brings the water of the river to the *Passo*, for the purpose of irrigating the land. During the great swells of the *Rio del Norte* in the months of May and June, the strength of the current destroys, almost every year, the dam which forces the waters of the river to enter the canal when they are low. The manner of restoring and strengthening the dam, is

* This was under the colonial system, tobacco being, in the southern provinces, a royal monopoly, and its cultivation restricted to the environs of Orizaba and Cordoba, and Huatusco and Songolica in Vera Cruz. Officers (*guardas de tabaco*) travelled the country for the purpose of pulling up whatever tobacco they found planted beyond those districts. Prior to the establishment of the monopoly in 1764, Guadalaxara was celebrated for its tobacco.

† Pike, pp. 331—6.

sufficiently ingenious. "The inhabitants form baskets of stakes, connected together by branches of trees, and filled with earth and stones: these gabions are abandoned to the force of the current, which, in its eddies, disposes them in the point where the canal separates from the river." This is about two miles above the town, where there is a bridge over the river, by which the road passes to the eastern bank.

Santa Fé, the capital, is situated on a small stream which empties itself into the *Rio del Norte* on the eastern side, at the foot of the mountains which divide the head waters of that river from those of the Arkansa and Red River of the Mississippi; lat. 36° 15′ N.; long. 104° 45′ W. of Greenwich. The town is "of a long rectangular form, extending about one mile from east to west on the banks of the creek. In the centre is the public square, one side of which forms the flank of the soldiers' square, which is closed, and in some degree defended by round towers, in the angles which flank the curtains. Another side of the square is formed by the palace of the governor, his guard-houses, &c.; another is occupied by the priests and their suite, and the fourth by the *chapitones* (European residents). The houses are generally only one story high, with flat roofs, and have a very mean appearance outside, but some of them are richly furnished, especially with plate." The population is stated by Humboldt at 3,600. From Chihuahua to Santa Fé, there is a good road for carriages over the level tract bordering the great river. "A sort of *caleche* is generally used, such as the Catalonians call a *volante*."

Albuquerque, situated to the west of the *Sierra Obscura*, opposite the village of Atrisco, about fifty

miles S. of Santa Fé, contained a population, in 1803, of 6,000. Taos, the most northern town in New Mexico, in lat. 37°, contained nearly 9,000 inhabitants.

The " great river of the north," so often referred to, rises in the *Sierra Verde*, in lat. 40° N., and long. 110° W. (of Paris).* The same range of mountains gives birth to the head waters of the Platte river and other tributaries of the Missouri, to those of the Arkansa, which falls into the Mississippi, and to the rivers of California. The course of the *Rio del Norte* may be estimated, Major Pike thinks, including its meanders, at 2,000 miles: after watering the provinces of New Mexico, part of Durango, Cohahuila, and New Santander, it falls into the Gulf of Mexico in lat. 26° N. " It cannot," says this Traveller, " in any part of its course, be termed a navigable stream, owing to sand-bars in the flat country, and mountains in the upper part, with which its course is interrupted; but small boats might ascend as high as the *presidio de Rio Grande* in Cohahuila; and it might be navigable for canoes in various parts of its course. Even in the mountains above Santa Fé, it afforded amply sufficient water for that species of navigation, and more than appeared to be flowing in its bed in the plains. This must be attributed to the numerous canals and the dry, sandy soil through which the river takes its course, and where much of the water that flows from the mountains is absorbed and lost. In the province of New Mexico, it is called the *Rio del Norte;* below, it is termed the *Rio Grande;* but in no instance did I hear it called the *Rio Bravo* (savage river), as many of our ancient

* Pike, p. 332.

maps designated it." Like the Orinoco, the Mississippi, and other American rivers, it has its periodical floods: the waters begin to swell in the month of April, are at their height in the beginning of May, and fall towards the end of June. During the drought, the strength of the current is so far diminished, that it is fordable, according to Humboldt, by horses of an extraordinary size, which are used by the natives for the purpose. The waters are at all times extremely muddy. "The inhabitants of the *Passo del Norte*," Humboldt states, "have preserved the recollection of a very extraordinary event which took place in 1752. The whole bed of the river became on a sudden dry, for more than 30 leagues above, and 20 leagues below the *Passo:* the water of the river precipitated itself into a newly formed chasm, and made its re-appearance near the *presidio* of *San Eleazaro*. The fine plains which surround the *Passo*, and which are intersected by the canals of irrigation, remained without water, and the inhabitants dug wells in the sandy bed of the river. At length, after the lapse of several weeks, the water resumed its ancient course,—no doubt, because the chasm and the subterranean courses had filled up." *

Within the limits of this province, towards the west,

* "This phenomenon bears some analogy to a fact which I was told by the Indians of *Jaen de Bracamorros* during my stay at Tomependa. In the beginning of the eighteenth century, the inhabitants of the village of Puyaya saw, to their great terror and astonishment, the bed of the river Amazons completely dried up for several hours. A part of the rocks near the cataract of Rentema had fallen down through an earthquake; and the waters of the river had been stopped in their course till they could get over the dike formed by the fall."—*Pol. Essay*, vol. ii. p. 266. The disappearance of the *Rio del Norte* for *several weeks*, must be regarded, however, as a much more singular phenomenon.

the rivers *San Rafael*, *San Xavier*, *De los Dolores*, and *De los Anamas* (or Nabajoa), have their origin, (the former two on the western side of the mountains in which the *Rio del Norte* takes its rise,) and all unite to form the great *Rio Colorado* of California. This river, which may be, by its meanders, about a thousand miles in length from its sources, falls into the head of the Californian Gulf in lat. 33° N. It is said to be navigable for 300 miles from its mouth by "square-rigged vessels." "By this river and the Arkansa," says Major Pike, "the best communication might be established between the two oceans in North America. There are represented to be various, numerous, and warlike nations of Indians on its banks. Through the whole of its course, its shores are entirely destitute of timber; and I was informed, that for 300 miles there is not a tree ten inches in diameter."

To the north of the Colorado and the Del Norte, the *Rio de San Buenaventura* takes its rise in the *Sierra Madre*, and discharges itself into the Pacific Ocean in lat. 39° 30′ N. The *Rio Gila* falls into the Gulf of California in lat. 33°, just below the mouth of the Colorado. The *Rio Puerco* (nasty river), a branch of the *Rio del Norte*, comes from the north, and joins the latter river about 100 miles below the *presidio del Norte*, in lat. 30°. None of these streams have any vestige of civilisation on their shores.

THE PROVINCE OF NEW CALIFORNIA

Is the name given, in the Spanish maps, to that part of the western coast which extends from the isthmus of Old California, or from the bay of *Todos los Santos* (all saints), to Cape Mendocino. "It is a long and

narrow extent of country, in which for these (sixty) years the Mexican Government has been establishing missions and military posts. No village or *hacienda* is to be found north of the port of San Francisco, which is more than 78 leagues to the south of Cape Mendocino. The province, in its present state, is only 197 leagues in length, and from 9 to 10 in breadth. The city of Mexico is the same distance in a straight line from Philadelphia, as from Monterey, which is the chief place of the missions of New California." San Francisco, the most northern settlement in all the Spanish possessions, is under nearly the same parallel as Taos in New Mexico, from which it is not more than 300 leagues distant. No civilised traveller, however, has hitherto come from New Mexico to the coast of California. The population of the province in 1803, was estimated at 15,600, being seven inhabitants to the square league.

"Although," says Humboldt, (to whom we are indebted for almost all that we know of these parts,) "the whole shore of New California was carefully examined by the great navigator Sebastian Viscaino, (as is proved by plans drawn up by himself in 1602,) this fine country was not occupied by the Spaniards till 167 years afterwards. The Court of Madrid, dreading lest the other maritime powers of Europe should form settlements on the north-western coast, which might become dangerous to the Spanish colonies, gave orders to the Chevalier de la Croix, the viceroy, and the *Visitador* Galvez, to found missions and *presidios* in the ports of San Diego and Monterey. For this purpose, two packet-boats set out from the port of San Blas, and anchored at San Diego in April 1763. Another expedition was sent out by land through Old California. Since Viscaino, no European had disembarked

on these distant coasts. The Indians were quite astonished to see men with clothes, though they knew that further east, there were men whose complexion was not of a copper colour. There was even found among them several pieces of silver, which had undoubtedly come from New Mexico. The first Spanish colonists who arrived, suffered severely from scarcity of provisions and an epidemical disease, the consequence of bad food, fatigue, and want of shelter. Almost all of them fell sick, and only eight individuals remained on their feet, who were employed in digging graves to receive the bodies of their unfortunate companions. The land expedition was very late in arriving with assistance to the infant colony. The Indians, to announce its arrival, placed themselves on casks with their arms stretched out, to shew that they had seen whites on horseback.

" The soil of New California is as well watered and fertile as that of Old California is arid and stony. It is one of the most picturesque countries that can be seen. The climate is much more mild than that of the same latitude on the eastern coast of the New Continent. The sky is foggy, but the frequent fogs, which render it difficult to land on the coast near Monterey and San Francisco, give vigour to vegetation, and fertilise the soil, which is covered with a black, spongy earth. In the eighteen missions which now exist in New California, wheat, maize, and beans (*fricoles*) are cultivated in abundance. As the thirty-six monks of St. Francis who govern these missions, are all Europeans, they have carefully introduced into the gardens of the Indians, the greater part of the vegetables and fruit-trees cultivated in Spain. The first colonists found, on their arrival in 1769, shoots of wild vines in the interior, which

yielded very large grapes, but of sour quality. The missionaries introduced the *vitis vinifera* of Europe, which is certainly a stranger to the New Continent. Good wine is made all along the coast, south and north of Monterey, to beyond lat. 37°. The European olive is successfully cultivated near the channel of Santa Barbara and at San Diego: the oil extracted is as good as that of the valley of Mexico, or the oils of Andalusia.

"Of all the missions of New Spain, those of the north-west coast exhibit the most rapid and remarkable progress in civilisation. In 1776, there were only eight villages; in 1790, only eleven: in 1802, they amounted to eighteen. The population of New California, including only the Indians attached to the soil who had begun to cultivate their fields, was, in 1790, 7,748 souls; in 1801, it had risen to 13,668; and in 1802, to 15,562. Thus the number of inhabitants had doubled in twelve years. In 1791, the Indians sowed in the whole province, only 874 *fanegas* of wheat, which yielded 15,197 *fanegas*. The cultivation had doubled in 1802; the quantity sown being 2089 *fanegas*, and the harvest 33,576 *fanegas*. In 1791, there were only 24,958 head of black cattle in all the Indian villages. In 1802, the live stock consisted of 67,782 beeves, 107,177 sheep, 1,040 hogs, 2,187 tamed horses,* and 877 mules. This progress of agriculture, this peaceful conquest of industry, is so much the more interesting, as the natives of this coast, very different from those of Nootka Sound and Norfolk Bay, were, less than fifty years ago, a wandering tribe, subsisting by fishing and hunting,

* The total number of horses, reckoning those who run wild in the savannas, amounted to 19,429.

and cultivating no sort of vegetables. The Indians of the Bay of San Francisco were at that time equally wretched with the inhabitants of Van Diemen's Land. The natives were found somewhat more advanced in civilisation (in 1769) only near the channel of Santa Barbara. There they constructed large huts of a pyramidal form, close to one another; they appeared benevolent and hospitable; and they presented to the Spaniards, vases very curiously wrought of stalks of rushes, lined with a very thin layer of asphaltus, that renders them impenetrable to water or strong liquors.

"The population of New California would have augmented still more rapidly, if the laws by which the Spanish *presidios* have been for ages governed, were not directly opposed to the true interests both of the mother country and the colonies. By these laws, the soldiers stationed at Monterey, are not permitted to live out of their barracks or to settle as colonists. The monks are generally averse to the settlement of white colonists, because, being *people who reason* (*gente de razon*),* they are not so easily brought to yield a blind obedience as the Indians. 'It is truly distressing,' says a well-informed and enlightened Spanish navigator (D. Dionisio Galiano), 'that the military, who pass a painful and laborious life, cannot, in their old age, settle in the country, and employ themselves in agriculture. The prohibition against building houses in the neighbourhood of the *presidio*, is contrary to all the dictates of sound policy. If the whites were permitted to employ themselves in the cultivation of the soil and the rearing of cattle, and if the mili-

* "The whites, mulattoes, *negroes*, and all the castes except Indians, go under the designation of *gente de razon*; a humiliating distinction for the natives, which had its origin in ages of barbarism."

tary, by establishing their wives and children in cottages, could prepare an asylum against the indigence to which they are too frequently exposed in their old age, New California would soon become a flourishing colony, a resting-place of the greatest utility for the Spanish navigators who trade between Peru, Mexico, and the Philippine Islands.' On removing the obstacles here pointed out, the Malouine Islands, the missions of the *Rio Negro*, and the coasts of San Francisco and Monterey, would soon be peopled with a great number of whites. What a striking contrast between the principles of colonisation followed by the Spaniards, and those by which Great Britain has created in a few years villages on the eastern coast of New Holland!

"The Indians who inhabit the villages of New California, have been of late years employed in spinning coarse woollen stuffs, called *frisadas*. But their principal occupation, the produce of which might become a very considerable branch of commerce, is the dressing of stags' skins. The Spanish and the Russian establishments being hitherto the only ones which exist on the north-west coast, it may not be useless to enumerate all the missions of New California, which have been founded up to 1803, in the order in which they run, from south to north:—1. *San Diego*, founded in 1769, fifteen leagues distant from the most northern mission of Old California; population in 1802, 1,560. 2. *San Luis Rey de Francia*, founded in 1798; population, 600. 3. *San Juan Capistrano*, founded in 1776; 1,000 inhabitants. 4. *San Gabriel*, 1771; 1,050 inhabitants. 5. *San Fernando*, 1797; 600 inhabitants. 6. *San Buenaventura*, 1782; 950 inhabitants. 7. *Santa Barbara*, 1786; 1,100 inhabitants. 8. *La Purissima Concepcion*, 1787; 1,000 inhabit-

ants. 9. *San Luis Obisbo*, 1772; 700 inhabitants. 10. *San Miguel*, 1797; 600 inhabitants. 11. *Soledad*, 1791; 570 inhabitants. 12. *San Antonio de Padua*, 1771; 1050 inhabitants. 13. SAN CARLOS DE MONTEREY, the capital, 1770; population, 700. 14. *San Juan Bautista*, 1797; 960 inhabitants. 15. *Santa Cruz*, 1794; 440 inhabitants. 16. *Santa Clara*, 1777; 1,300 inhabitants. 17. *San Jose*, 1797; 630 inhabitants. 18. *San Francisco*, 1776, with a fine port; population, 820."*

San Carlos de Monterey is two leagues distant from the *presidio* of the same name. It is situated at the foot of the Cordillera of Santa Lucia, which is covered with oaks, pines, and rose-bushes. Cabrillo, who first discovered this coast, in 1542, as high as latitude 43°, called the Bay of Monterey, *Bahia de los Pinos*, on account of the beautiful pines with which the neighbouring mountains are clothed. It received its present name sixty years afterwards, in honour of the viceroy, Count de Monterey. "In the vicinity of San Carlos is found the famous shell (*aurum merum*) of Monterey, which is in request among the inhabitants of Nootka Sound." From Monterey to the mouth of the Colombia river, is a navigation of from eight to ten days.

Within the extent of 180 leagues of coast, from San Diego to San Francisco, no fewer than seventeen dialects are said to be spoken by the natives. The northern part of the province is inhabited by the *Rumsen* and *Escelen* tribes, who speak languages totally different: they form the population of Monterey. In the Bay of San Francisco are found the

* Humboldt's Pol. Essay, vol. ii. pp. 292—308. Of these 15,562 inhabitants, 7,945 were males, 7,617 females. The number of whites, M. Humboldt estimates, by conjecture, at 1,300.

Matalan, *Salsen*, and *Quirote* tribes, each having its separate dialect, but evidently derived from a common language. Between some of these idioms and the Aztec, there is an apparent analogy, especially in the final *tl*. Humboldt remarks, too, that the Indians of California discover the same fondness for warm vapour baths as the old Mexicans and several tribes of Northern Asia, as well as of Northern Europe. "We find in the missions, beside each cottage, a small vaulted edifice. On returning from their labour, the Indians enter this oven, in which the fire has a few moments before been extinguished; and they remain there for a quarter of an hour. When they feel themselves covered with perspiration, they plunge into the water of some neighbouring stream, or wallow about in the sand. This rapid transition from heat to cold, and the sudden suppression of the cutaneous transpiration, which a European would justly dread, causes the most agreeable sensations in the savage, who enjoys whatever acts with violence on his nervous system." This same practice is found among the natives of Russia and Iceland.

Neither buffaloes nor elks are found in the low cordillera which runs along this coast. On the crest of the mountains, which are covered with snow in the month of November, wander herds of a peculiar species of wild goat, of an ashy white, with horns curved backwards like those of the chamois; they are called *berendos*. The forests of the plains abound with stags of a gigantic size, a brown colour, smooth, and without spot, with branches above four feet in length.* This stag of New California is represented

* Sebastian Viscaino, the navigator, asserts, that when he put into the port of Monterey in 1602, he saw some with branches nearly nine feet in length.

by all travellers to be one of the most beautiful animals of Spanish America. "These *venados*," says Humboldt, "run with extraordinary rapidity, throwing their head back, and supporting their branches on their backs. The horses of New Biscay, which are famed for running, are incapable of keeping up with them; and they only reach them at the moment when the animal, who very seldom drinks, comes to quench his thirst. He is then too heavy to display all the energy of his muscular force, and is easily come up with. The hunter who pursues him, gets the better of him by means of a noose, in the same way that they manage wild horses and cattle in the Spanish colonies. The Indians make use, however, of another very ingenious artifice to approach the stags, and kill them. They cut off the head of a *venado*, the branches of which are very long; and they empty the neck, and place it on their own head. Masked in this manner, and armed also with bows and arrows, they conceal themselves in the brushwood, or among the high and thick herbage. By imitating the motion of a stag when it feeds, they draw round them the flock, which become the victims of the deception. This extraordinary hunt was seen by M. Costanzo on the coast of the channel of Santa Barbara; and it was seen twenty-four years afterwards, in the savannas in the neighbourhood of Monterey, by the officers embarked in the *galetas* Sutil and Mexicana. The enormous stag-branches which Montezuma displayed as objects of curiosity to the companions of Cortez, belonged, perhaps, to the *venados* of New California. I saw two of them, which were found in the old monument of Xoachicalco, and which are still preserved in the palace of the viceroy. Notwithstanding the want of interior communication

in the fifteenth century, in the kingdom of Anahuac, it would not have been extraordinary if these stags had come from hand to hand from the 35° to the 20° of latitude; in the same manner as we see the beautiful *piedras de Mahagua* of Brazil, among the Caribs, near the mouth of the Orinoco."

The peninsula which forms the province of

OLD CALIFORNIA,

WHILE it equals England in extent of territory, "does not contain a population equal to Ipswich or Deptford." The number of square leagues is stated by Humboldt at 7,295; the population in 1803, at 9,000. Extending from lat. 22° 48′ 10″,* to lat. 31°, it lies under the same parallel as Bengal and the Canary Islands. "The sky is constantly serene and of a deep blue, without a cloud; or, should any clouds appear at the setting of the sun, they display the most beautiful shades of violet, purple, and green. All persons who have ever been in California, preserve a recollection of the extraordinary beauty of this phenomenon, which depends on a particular state of the vesicular vapour and the purity of the air in these climates. No where could an astronomer find a more delightful abode, than at Cumana, Coro, the island of Margarita, and the coast of California. But, unfortunately, in this peninsula, the sky is more beautiful than the earth. The soil is sandy and arid, like the shores of Provence: vegetation is at a stand, and rain is very unfrequent."

A chain of mountains runs through the centre of the peninsula, the most elevated of which, the

* The latitude of Cape San Lucas.

Cerro de la Giganta, is between 4,500 and 5,000 feet high, and appears to be of volcanic origin. This cordillera is inhabited by a breed of wild sheep (*carneros cimarones*), resembling in their form and habits, the *moufion* of Sardinia: they leap, like the ibex, with their head downwards, and their horns are curved back in a spiral form. They are supposed to differ, however, specifically, from the *berendos* of New California. At the foot of this cordillera is found, for the most part, a sandy or a stony stratum, from which a species of cactus of a cylindrical form (*organos del tunal*) shoots up to an extraordinary height. There are but few springs; and where water is found, the rock is often bare of vegetable earth. In those few points where there are both water and earth, the fertility of the soil is immense. In these places, where the Jesuits established their first missions, maize, the manioc, and the *igname*, vegetate vigorously, and the vine yields an excellent grape. In general, however, the arid nature of the soil and the want of water preclude all cultivation; and Old California will never be able to maintain a great population, any more than the northern part of Sonora, which is almost equally dry and sandy.

Old California was first colonised by the Jesuits, not without opposition on the part of the Franciscans, their rivals, who endeavoured, from time to time, to introduce themselves among the Indians, as well as from the soldiers of the *presidios*. The village of Loreto, the principal place of all the missions, was founded in 1697, by Father Kühn, the astronomer of Ingolstadt, under the name of the *presidio* of *San Dionisio*. It was not till subsequently to the year 1744, that the Spanish establishments in California became considerable, owing to the successful

exertions of the Jesuits.* In a very few years, they built sixteen villages in the interior. Since their expulsion in 1767, California has been confided to the Dominican monks of the city of Mexico, who have not been so fortunate in their missions as the Franciscans in New California. The population of the villages has ever since been on the decline, and the number of the missions was reduced in 1803 to sixteen. The principal are, Loreto, above referred to; Santa Ana, a mission and *real;* and San Joseph. The missions of Santiago and Guadalupe remain without inhabitants. The small-pox and syphilis are stated to have been the chief causes of the depopulation; but M. Humboldt reasonably conjectures that there are other causes, connected with the political administration, which have retarded the prosperity of the settlements. The number of the savages is supposed to be under 4,000.

The chief attraction which has led navigators to visit the coast of this desert country, is, the pearls which abound in the southern part. "Since the cessation of the pearl-fishery near the island of Margarita, opposite the coast of Araya, the Gulfs of

* "Since the first discovery of California, there have been various wandering missionaries who have visited it at different times, though to little purpose; but of late years, the Jesuits, encouraged and supported by a large donation from the Marquis de Valero, a most munificent bigot, have fixed themselves upon the place, and have there established a very considerable mission. Their principal settlement lies just within Cape St. Lucas, where they have collected a great number of savages, and have endeavoured to inure them to agriculture and other mechanic arts. Nor have their efforts been altogether ineffectual, for they have planted vines at their settlements with very good success, so that they already make a considerable quantity of wine, resembling in flavour the inferior sorts of Madeira."—ANSON'S *Voyage round the World*, 1740—4, chap. x.

Panama and California are the only quarters in the Spanish colonies which supply pearls for the European market. Those of California are of a very beautiful water, and large, but they are frequently of an irregular and unpleasing figure. The shell which produces the pearl, is particularly to be found in the Bay of Ceralvo, and round the islands of Santa Cruz and San José. In 1768—1769, a private soldier of Loreto, Juan Ocio, became rich in a short time, by pearl-fishing on the coast of Ceralvo. Since that period, the number of pearls annually brought to market, has been reduced almost to nothing. The Indians and negroes who follow the laborious occupation of divers, are so poorly paid by the whites, that the fishery is considered as abandoned." In 1803, a Spanish ecclesiastic, resident at Mexico, proposed to the Government to employ a diving-bell in the pearl-fishery; and M. Humboldt witnessed a series of experiments made in a small pond near the castle of Chapoltepec, with a view to carry this project into effect; but it does not appear that they were ever repeated in the Gulf of California. Hitherto, he says, almost all the pearls supplied by the colonies, have come from the Gulf of Panama. The western coast of Mexico, "especially that part of the Great Ocean situated between the Gulf of Bayonna, the three Mary islands, and Cape St. Lucas," abounds also in *cachalots*, or spermaceti whales. This fishery is an important object of mercantile speculation, and has long been pursued by both English and Anglo-American traders. Yet "the Spanish Mexicans," remarks the learned Traveller, "see the cachalot fishers arrive on their coast after a navigation of more than 5,000 marine leagues, without ever endeavouring to share in the pursuit. In the present state of the colonies, the

sloth of the inhabitants is inimical to the execution of such projects; and it would be impossible to procure sailors willing to embrace so rude a business, and so miserable a life, as that of a cachalot-fisher. How could they be found in a country where, according to the ideas of the common people, all that is necessary to happiness, is, bananas, salted flesh, a hammock, and a guitar? The hope of gain is too weak a stimulus under a zone where beneficent Nature provides man with a thousand means of procuring an easy and peaceful existence, without quitting his country, and without struggling with the monsters of the ocean."*

FROM SANTA FE TO NATCHITOCHES.

Major Pike, to whom repeated reference has been made in the preceding account of the interior provinces, arrived at the *Rio del Norte*, in an exploratory journey through the interior of Louisiana. He supposed it at first to be the Red River. Here they were discovered by the Spaniards, and a detachment was sent out to bring the whole party to Santa Fé. The American Major, finding that he had unwittingly committed himself by entering the Spanish territory, and having no orders to engage in hostilities, had no alternative but to comply with the requisition. On the 27th of February, 1807, the party set out in a southerly direction, and on the third day reached the village of *Agua Caliente* (warm springs), situated on the eastern branch of a stream of that name, about twelve miles above its junction with the river *de los Conejos* (of rabbits). The warm springs, which give name to the place, are two in

* See, for further information relative to the pearl and cachalot fisheries, Pol. Essay, vol. iii. pp. 79—94.

number, about ten yards apart, and each affording sufficient water for a mill-seat; they are more than 33° above blood heat, and appeared to be impregnated with copper. The next day, they arrived at the village of St. John's, situated on the eastern branch of the *Rio del Norte*, a little below the confluence of the *Rio de los Conejos*, "the residence of the president priest of the province." In this day's route, they passed several mud-walled villages and settlements, and were shewn the ruins of several old villages, which had been destroyed by the Ietans. St. John's is supposed to contain about a thousand souls, chiefly civilised Indians; the whites in all these villages not forming a twentieth part of the population. On the fifth day, they reached Santa Fé.

The reception which the American party met with from the governor, was manly and polite; but it was deemed necessary that they should be sent to Chihuahua, to appear before the commandant-general. Accordingly, on the 4th of March, they set out under an escort. The first night, they lodged in a small village. The second day, they reached San Domingo, inhabited by *Keres* Indians, about 1,000 in number, governed by their own chief. These village chiefs are distinguished by a cane with a silver head and black tassel. On their arrival, the alcalde of San Domingo waited on the captain of the escort, cap in hand, to receive his orders. "After we had refreshed ourselves a little," says the American Major, "the captain sent for the keys of the church. On entering it, I was much astonished to find, enclosed in mud-brick walls, many rich paintings, and the saint as large as life, elegantly ornamented with gold and silver. The captain made a slight inclination of the head, and intimated to me that this was the patron of the

village. In an outside hall was placed another image of the saint, less richly ornamented, where the populace repair daily to return thanks for benefactions received, or to implore new favours. Many young girls made choice of the time of our visit to be on their knees before the holy patron. From the flat roof of the church, we had a delightful view of the village, the *Rio del Norte* on the west, the mountains of St. Dies (Dionisius ?) to the south, and the valley round the town, on which were numerous herds of goats, sheep, and asses. On the whole, this was one of the finest views in New Mexico."

Third day; from San Domingo to the village of San Dies, opposite the mountain of the same name. At the village of San Felipe, which occurred in this day's journey, the road crosses a rude bridge of eight arches, the construction of which is sufficiently ingenious. "The pillars are of neat wood-work, something similar to a crate, and in the form of a keel-boat, the sharp end (or bow) to the current: in this crate, or abutment, filled with stone, the river has lodged sand or clay, until the whole has become of tolerably firm consistency. On the top of the pillars are laid pine-logs length-wise, squared on two sides, and joined sufficiently close to make a tolerable bridge for horses, but which would not be very safe for carriages, as there are no hand-rails." At Albuquerque, which they passed through on the fourth day, they were received by the priest, Father Ambrosio Guerra, in a very flattering manner. After taking some refreshment, they were led into an inner apartment, where the father ordered his "adopted children of the female sex" to make their appearance. Among them were Indians of various nations, Spanish girls, French, and finally, two who, from their com-

plexion, Major Pike judged to be English. "On perceiving that I noticed them, he ordered the rest to retire, and directed these two to sit down on the sofa beside me. He told me, that they had been taken to the east by the Ietans, and passed from one nation to another, till he purchased them: at that time, they were still infants, and could recollect neither names nor language. Concluding that they were my countrywomen, he ordered them to embrace me as a mark of my friendship, to which they appeared nothing loath. We then sat down to dinner, which consisted of various dishes, with excellent wines, and, to crown all, we were waited upon by half a dozen of these beautiful girls. After the cloth was removed, the priest beckoned me to follow him, and led me into his *sanctum sanctorum*, where he had rich and majestic images of various saints, and, in the midst, the crucified Jesus, crowned with thorns, but with rich rays of golden glory surrounding his head. The room was hung with black silk curtains, which served to augment the gloom and majesty of the scene. When he conceived my imagination sufficiently wrought up, he put on a black gown and mitre, and kneeling before the cross, took hold of my hand, and endeavoured gently to pull me down beside him: on my refusal, he prayed fervently for a few minutes, then rose, laid his hands on my shoulders, and, as I conceived, blessed me. He then said to me, 'You will not be a Christian. Oh! what a pity! what a pity!' He then threw off his robes, took me by the hand, and led me out to the company, smiling; but the scene I had gone through made too serious an impression on my mind to be effaced, until we took our departure, an hour afterwards, having received great marks of favour from the father."

Every where in journeying through New Mexico, the strangers met with the most unaffected kindness and hospitality; and the Major expresses his lively gratitude for the "noble reception" they gave to him and his "poor lads." The priests, too, were uniformly found much more liberal than those nearer the vice-royalty, where they lived under awe of the terrors of the Inquisition: many of them were remarkably friendly. Some, indeed, Major Pike says, would in his presence laugh at the superstition of the common people, and the awe in which they were held by them. The priest of San Felipe, who entertained the party in the most hospitable manner, entered, during dinner, into a long and candid detail respecting the injustice done to the Creoles, wherein the worthy father spared neither the government nor its administrators. "Both as to government and religion," says the Major, "he displayed a liberality of opinion and a fund of knowledge that astonished me. He shewed me a statistical table, on which he had taken the whole province of New Mexico by villages, beginning at Taos on the north-west, and ending with Valencia on the south; giving their latitude, longitude, population, whether savages or Spaniards, civilised or barbarous, Christians or Pagans, their numbers, name of the nation, when converted, how governed, military force, clergy, salary, &c. &c.; in short, a complete geographical and historical sketch of the province. Of this I wished to obtain a copy, but perceived that the captain was somewhat surprised at the father's having shewn it me." At Father Ambrosio's, there was a chart which gave the near connexion of the sources of the *Rio del Norte* and the *Rio Colorado* of California. These are interesting facts, inasmuch as they serve to shew

by how slight a tenure the Spanish government held these distant provinces, and how ripe the priesthood appear to have been for the political changes which have subsequently taken place.

Both above and below Albuquerque, the inhabitants were beginning to open the canals, to let in the water of the river: men, women, and children of all ages, were seen assisting at the "joyful labour." The cultivation of the fields was now commencing, by which an air of life and gayety was given to the surrounding scenery. The travellers crossed the *Rio del Norte* a little below this town, where it is 400 yards wide, but, at this time, not more than three feet deep, and there was excellent fording. They lodged at a village some miles further on. The road continues on the west side of the river to the little village of Tousac, on leaving which, the party were ferried over by a cart, as the stream was nearly four feet deep. They proceeded on the fifth day as far as the village of San Fernandez. While here, they had a very characteristic specimen at once of Castilian politeness and Mexican morals. The following notification was sent by the commanding officer to the *alcaldes* of several neighbouring villages: "Send this evening six or eight of your handsomest young girls to the village of San Fernandez, where I propose giving a fandango for the entertainment of the American officers arrived to-day." This order, which was punctually obeyed, "portrays," remarks Major Pike, "more clearly than a chapter of observations, the degraded state of the common people. In the evening, when the company arrived, the ball began after their usual manner, and there was really a handsome display of beauty." Lieutenant Malgares, who conducted

the escort, though only a subaltern, had eight mules loaded with his common camp-equipage, wines, confectionary, &c.!

On the 10th of March (the seventh day), they reached the village of Sibilleta, having travelled by very easy stages: they now took leave of the inhabited country, and entered the wilderness. The road became very rough. "Small hills, running into the river, form valleys, the bottoms of which appeared richer than those to the north." They passed a caravan going southward with about 15,000 sheep, for which they would bring back merchandise: the party consisted of about 300 persons, besides an escort of between thirty and forty troops. A similar expedition goes out in the autumn: during the other parts of the year, no one travels the road. The caravans collect at Sibilleta, where they separate on their return: the February caravan returns in March. The government couriers meet and exchange packets at the *Passo*. Another party of fifty men, with about 200 horses loaded with merchandise, was met coming northward. The eleventh day, they halted at a point of the river, at the foot of the "mountain of Friar Christopher," where the main road leaves the river for two days' journey, bearing due south, while the river forms a considerable bend to the south-west: the distance, by the course of the river, to where the roads meet, is a march of five days, during which the river must twice be crossed. This latter route was taken by the party. On the seventeenth day, they halted at a salt-lake, and on the day following, after passing over a mountainous tract, they reached the town of *Passo del Norte*. From this place, they proceeded by way of San Eleazaro and Carracal, to Chihuahua. Between the former two

stations, there is a small " pond," formed by a spring which rises in the centre, called the *Ojo Malalka*, which is the only water for sixty miles of the road.

At Chihuahua, the American Major had to undergo an examination from the commandant-general, which was conducted with the utmost urbanity, dictated alike by Spanish courtesy and by that polite respect with which a citizen of the United States seldom fails to be treated in this country. He remained in this city from the 2d to the 28th of April, during which his time appears to have been not unpleasantly occupied, the evenings being spent in visiting; till at length, he received notice from his Excellency to hold himself in readiness to march. The route he was to pursue, lies in a south-easterly direction to the fort of *San Pablo*, situated on the small river of the same name, flowing from the N.W., and falling into the Conchos. Here the party halted on the second day. Five hours further, they arrived at the banks of the Conchos, which they pursued for some leagues to its confluence with the Rio Florida, where there is a " miserable village." On the banks of the latter river are some very flourishing settlements, and the land is well timbered. The route lay up this river for six hours to Guaxequillo. Four miles beyond that place, the road diverges from its course, leaving it to the right, and, for between 40 and 50 miles, no water occurs. About 10 miles further, the road passes due west through a gap in the mountain, and then turns south to a river twenty feet wide, with high, steep banks. It was now dry, except in holes, but, when full, is impassable. On the ninth day from Chihuahua (excluding a halt of three days at Guaxequillo), the travellers reached a station, surrounded with mines, which Major Pike

calls *Pelia*, where are two large warm springs, "strongly impregnated" with mineral properties. The next day, they passed a copper mine, which was diligently worked, and arrived at the *hacienda* of Cadena, situated on a small stream, at the pass called the "Door of the Prison." The following day, they arrived at a village which Major Pike calls Mauperne (Mapimi?), situated at the foot of metalliferous mountains, with some eight or nine mines in the neighbourhood. Three miles further, they halted for the night at a station beautifully situated on a little stream, in the midst of fig-trees. Early on the twelfth day, they arrived at a place where the road branches out into three. That on the right-hand is the main road to Mexico, leading through Parras and Saltillo; the central one leaves all the villages to the right, passing only some plantations; the left-hand road leads immediately through the mountains to Montelovez, and is called the route of the *Bolson de Mapimi:* it was first travelled by M. de la Croix, afterwards viceroy of Peru. In passing from Chihuahua to Texas by this route, you make in seven days, what takes from fifteen to twenty by the ordinary road; but it is very scarce of water, and dangerous for small parties, as the Appaches fill these mountains. The middle road was the one which the escort had directions to pursue, in order that the Americans might not approximate the frontiers of the viceroyalty; but, on the 16th day, they again joined the main road. They left Parras on the right, and, a league beyond, halted, on the 17th day, at the *hacienda* of San Lorenzo, pleasantly situated in the midst of vineyards. About five and twenty miles further is the *hacienda* of Polloss, a handsome place, where the Marquis de San Miguel frequently spends the summer: the journey

from the capital occupies ten days. This nobleman is stated to own the land, from the mountains of the *Rio del Norte* to some distance into the viceroyalty, and his annual revenues are immense. He maintains 1,500 troops to protect his vassals and property from the savages, all cavalry, and as well dressed and armed as the regulars. "The *hacienda* of Polloss," says Major Pike, "is a square enclosure of about 300 feet, the building only one story high, but some of the apartments are very elegantly furnished. In the centre of the square is a *jet d'eau*, which casts forth water from eight spouts extended from a colossal female figure: from this fountain all the population procure their supply of water. The marquis has likewise built a very handsome church, which, with its ornaments, cost him at least 20,000 dollars. To officiate in it, he maintains here a little, stiff, superstitious priest. In the rear of the palace (for so it might be called) is a fish-pond, stocked with immense numbers of fine fish. The population was about 2,000 souls. This was our nearest point to the city of Mexico."

The route which was pursued from this place, passes between a double range of mountains, which this Writer calls "*Polloss* mountains," but crosses a transverse branch, called "the mountain of the three rivers." It falls into the main road from the eastern provinces, within a few leagues of Montelovez, which the travellers reached on the 25th day. On the 27th day's march, they passed the last mountains, and entered the great valley of the Mississippi. On the 30th day, they reached the *presidio* of *Rio Grande*, where, to the great mortification of the Spanish officer, it was with the utmost difficulty they obtained any thing to eat. The mosquitoes, which had made their

appearance the first night after leaving Montelovez, had now become very troublesome; and soon after crossing the *Rio Grande*, horse-flies were seen, and some wild horses. From this point, it is a distance of 150 miles to where the route crosses the river Mariana, one of the heads of the San Antonio, a pretty little stream, forming the line, in that direction, between Cohahuila and Texas. On the 36th day, the party reached San Antonio, the capital of the latter province, where the American Major met with a reception from Governors Cordero and Herrara, not merely hospitable and polite; it was more like the cordiality of old friends and countrymen. They came three miles in a coach to meet the party. "We then," says Major Pike, "repaired to their quarters, where we were received like their children. Cordero informed me, that he had discretionary orders as to the manner of my going out of the country; that he therefore wished me to choose my time, mode, &c.; and that any sum of money I might want, was at my service; that, in the mean time, his quarters would be my residence, and that he had caused to be vacated a house immediately opposite for my men." On the next day but one, a large party dined at Governor Cordero's, when he gave as the first toast, the President of the United States. In conversation, the two generals discovered, we are told, an astonishing acquaintance with the political character of the American executive, and the local interests of the several parts of the Union. The portrait which Major Pike has drawn of these distinguished individuals, presents them in a very estimable light.

"Don Antonio Cordero was fifty years of age, about five feet ten inches in height, fair complexion, and blue eyes. He wore his hair turned back, and

every part of his dress was soldier-like. He still possessed an excellent constitution, and a body which appeared to be neither impaired by the fatigues of the various campaigns he had made, nor disfigured by the numerous wounds received from the enemies of his king. He was one of the select officers who had been chosen by the Court of Madrid, to be sent to America about thirty-five years, to discipline and organise the Spanish provincials, and had been employed in all the various kingdoms and provinces of New Spain, and through the parts which we explored. He was universally beloved and respected, and by far the most popular man in the internal provinces. He spoke the Latin and French languages well; was generous, gallant, brave, and sincerely attached to his king and country. These numerous qualifications have advanced him to the rank of colonel of cavalry, and governor of the provinces of Cohahuila and Texas. His usual residence was Montelovez, which he had greatly embellished; but, since our taking possession of Louisiana, he had removed to San Antonio, in order to be nearer the frontier, to be able to apply the remedy to any evil which might arise from the collision of our lines.

"Don Simon de Herrara is about five feet eleven inches high, has sparkling black eyes, with dark complexion and hair. He was born in the Canary Islands, served in the infantry in France, Spain, and Flanders; he speaks the French language well, and a little of the English. He is engaging in his conversation with his equals, polite and obliging to his inferiors, and, in his actions, one of the most gallant and accomplished of men. He possesses a great knowledge of mankind, from his experience in various countries and societies, and knows how to employ the genius of each of his

subordinates to advantage. He had been in the United States during the presidency of General Washington, and had been introduced to that hero, of whom he spoke in terms of exalted veneration. He is now lieutenant-colonel of infantry and governor of the kingdom of New Leon. His seat of government is Montelrey; and, probably, if ever a chief was adored by his people, it is Herrara. When his time expired last, he immediately repaired to Mexico, attended by three hundred of the most respectable people of his district, who carried with him the sighs, tears, and prayers of thousands that he might be continued in the government. The viceroy thought proper to accede to their wishes *pro tempore*, and the king has since confirmed the nomination. When I saw him, he had been about one year absent, during which time the citizens of rank in Montelrey had not suffered a marriage or baptism to take place in any of their families, waiting until their common father could be there, to consent and give joy to the occasion by his presence. What greater proof could be given of their esteem and love? In drawing a parallel between the two friends, I should say, that Cordero was the man of the greatest reading, Herrara of the greatest knowledge of the world. Cordero has lived all his life a bachelor. Herrara married an English lady in early youth at Cadiz, who, by her suavity of manners, makes herself as much beloved and esteemed by the ladies as her noble husband is by the men. By her he has several children, one now an officer in the royal service. The two friends agree perfectly in one point,—their hatred of tyranny of every kind, and in a secret determination never to see that flourishing part of the New World subject to any European lord,

except him whom their honour and loyalty bind them to defend with their lives and fortune.

" It may not be improper to state, that we owe to Governor Herrara's prudence, that we are not now (1807) engaged in a war with Spain. This will be explained by the following anecdote, which he related in the presence of his friend Cordero, and which was confirmed by him. When the difficulties commenced on the Sabine, the commandant-general and the viceroy consulted each other, and both determined to maintain what they deemed the dominions of their master inviolate. The viceroy therefore ordered Herrara to join Cordero with 1,300 men, and both the viceroy and General Salcedo ordered Cordero to cause our troops to be attacked, should they pass the *Rio Onde*. These orders were positively reiterated to Herrara, the actual commanding officer of the Spanish army on the frontiers, and gave rise to the many messages which he sent to General Wilkinson, when he was advancing with our troops; but, finding they were not attended to, he called a council of war on the question, whether to attack or not. The council gave it as their opinion, that they should immediately commence a predatory warfare, but avoid a general engagement. Yet, notwithstanding the orders of the viceroy and the commanding general, Governor Cordero, and the opinion of his officers, he had the firmness, or the temerity, to enter into the agreement with General Wilkinson which at present exists relative to our boundaries on that frontier. On his return, he was received with coolness by Cordero, and they both made their communication to their superiors. ' Until an answer was received,' said Herrara, ' I experienced the most unhappy period of my life, conscious that I

had served my country faithfully, at the same time that I had violated every principle of military duty.' At length the answer arrived; and what was it but the thanks of the viceroy and the commandant-general for having pointedly disobeyed their orders, with assurances that they would represent his services in exalted terms to the king! What could have produced this change of sentiment, is to me unknown; but the letter was published to the army, and confidence was restored between the two chiefs and the troops." *

Every thing at San Antonio appeared to be in a flourishing and improving state, owing to the encouragement given to industry by these two generals. The American Major remained here for a week, and then took his departure, with a Spanish escort, for the frontier. On the first day, they reached the river Guadelupe; a distance of 30 miles. On the second day, they came at the end of fifteen miles to the St. Mark, and proceeded the same distance beyond it. Third day, distance advanced, 26 miles: within the last six, oak timber commences. Fourth day, they arrived at Red River, and advanced 26 miles. Fifth day, a journey of 30 miles, in the course of which they passed a large encampment of Tancard Indians. Sixth day, at the end of 25 miles, they crossed the river Brassos, where there is a ferry, with a stockade guard consisting of one corporal and six men; and proceeded through a tract which is at certain seasons an impassable swamp: distance advanced, 31 miles. Seventh day, they advanced 30 miles through alternate woods and prairies of rich land, passing two small creeks. Eighth day, 20 miles through similar country.

* Pike, pp. 316—318.

Ninth day, they reached the station on the river Trinity, where they found both officers and privates (consisting of two captains, two lieutenants, three ensigns, and nearly 100 men) all sick, one scarcely able to assist the other. They met this day a number of runaway negroes; also, some Frenchmen and Irishmen: distance advanced, 20 miles. Tenth day, 22 miles. Eleventh day, 40 miles, crossing, in the latter part of the day, the river Natchez. Twelfth day, they came, at the end of fifteen miles, to the river Angelina, about the width of the Natchez, running south; and, twenty-two miles further, arrived at Nacogdoches. This part of the country is well watered, but the soil is hilly and sandy, covered with pine, scrub-oak, &c. Total distance from San Antonio, 336 miles.

From Nacogdoches, it is about 74 miles to the Sabine river, the frontier line between the Mexican and American territory, where Major Pike parted with the Spanish escort. About half way, the route crosses the river Toyac, flowing through a rich and well-timbered district. At length, on the 1st of July, the second day after crossing the Sabine, Major Pike arrived at Natchitoches; and "language cannot express," he says, "the gayety of his heart, when he once more beheld the standard of his country waving aloft. All hail, cried I, the ever-sacred name of country, in which is embraced that of kindred, friends, and every other tie that is dear to the soul of man!" Four months had elapsed since he left Santa Fé; but six and twenty days were passed at Chihuahua, six days at San Antonio, and the other halts appear to have amounted to nine days, leaving 79 marching days.

After leaving San Antonio, Major Pike had pursued

the high road of Texas from Louisiana to Mexico. From that city, a road leads off, by way of Loredo (on the banks of the *Rio del Norte*), Saltillo, Charcas, San Luis Potosi, and Queretaro, to the capital. "The road from New Orleans to the capital of New Spain," says Humboldt, "opened by the inhabitants of Louisiana, who come to purchase horses in the interior provinces, is more than 540 leagues in length, and is consequently equal to the distance from Madrid to Warsaw. The road is said to be very difficult from the want of water and habitations; but it presents by no means the same natural difficulties as must be overcome in the tracks along the ridge of the Cordilleras from Santa Fé in New Granada (Colombia) to Quito, or from Quito to Cusco. It was by this road of Texas, that an intrepid traveller, M. Pagés, captain in the French navy, went, in 1767, from Louisiana to Acapulco. The road from Louisiana to Mexico presents very few obstacles as far as the *Rio del Norte*, and we only begin from the Saltillo to ascend towards the table-land. The declivity of the Cordillera is by no means rapid there; and we can have no doubt, considering the progress of civilisation in the New Continent, that land-communication will become gradually very frequent between the United States and New Spain. Public coaches will one day roll on from Philadelphia and Washington to Mexico and Acapulco."

To complete our statistical and topographical view of this interesting country, we must now suddenly transport the reader across half the Mexican territory, and again place him on the western declivity of the great Cordillera of Anahuac, within the intendancy of

VALLADOLID.

This intendancy, at the period of the Spanish conquest, formed part of the independent kingdom of Mechoacan, which extended from the mouth of the river Zacatula to the port of *Natividad*, and from the mountains of Xala and Colima to the river of Lerma and the lake of Chapala. Its capital was Tzintzontzan, or Huitzitzila, situated on the banks of the lake of Pascuaro. The modern intendancy lies between Guadalaxara and Guanaxuato on the north, Mexico on the east and south-east, and on the west and south-west it is washed by the great Pacific for rather more than 38 leagues of coast. Its greatest length is in a direction S.S.W. and N.N.E., from Zacatula to the basaltic mountain of Palangeo, a distance of 78 leagues. Its extent in square leagues is 3,446; one fifth less than Ireland. Its population in 1803, was 376,400 souls, being 109 to the square league. It contains three places dignified with the name of city, viz. Valladolid, the capital, Pascuaro, and Tzintzontzan; three towns, Citaquaro, Zamora, and Charo; 263 villages, 205 parishes, and 326 farms. In the imperfect census of 1793, which gave the total population at less than 290,000, there were reckoned 80,000 Whites, and nearly 120,000 Indians: there were 154 monks, 138 nuns, and 293 secular ecclesiastics.

All the southern part of the intendancy is inhabited exclusively by Indians, the only White to be met with in any of the villages being the *curé*, and he also is frequently an Indian or a Mulatto. "The benefices are so poor, that the Bishop of Mechoacan has the greatest difficulty in procuring ecclesiastics to settle in a country where Spanish is scarcely ever spoken, and

where, along the coasts of the Great Ocean, the priests are frequently carried off by malignant fevers engendered by the *miasmata*, before the expiration of seven or eight months." It is only to this portion of the intendancy, however, that the character of insalubrity attaches. The greater part of the province, situated on the western declivity of the table-land, intersected with hills and charming valleys, which present the uncommon appearance (under the torrid zone) of extensive and well-watered meadows, — enjoys a mild and temperate climate, and is reckoned peculiarly healthy.

The Indian natives of this province are of three distinct races: the Tarascs, celebrated in the sixteenth century for the gentleness of their manners, their industry in the mechanical arts, and the harmony of their language, which abounds in vowels; the Otomites, a tribe still far behind in civilisation, whose language is full of nasals and gutturals; and the Chichimecs, who speak the Aztec or Mexican language.* The Indians of this province generally, are described by Humboldt as the most industrious of New Spain. "They have," he says, "a remarkable talent of cutting out small figures in wood, and dressing them in clothes made of the pith of an aquatic plant, which, being very porous, imbibes the most vivid colours."† The annexed plate is copied from a drawing made from two of these Indian figures, which exhibits a strange mixture of the old Indian costume with that introduced by the Spaniards. The learned Traveller gives us no account, however, of the distinctive features and characteristics of the several tribes of Indians found in this province, — an inte-

* See vol. i. p. 109. † Humboldt's Researches, vol. ii. p. 164.

resting point, which will merit the attention of future travellers.

Valladolid de Mechoacan, (so called to distinguish it from Valladolid de Yucatan,) the capital of this intendancy, is an episcopal city, situated in a delicious climate, at an elevation of nearly 6,400 feet above the level of the sea; and yet, at this moderate height, and under lat. 19° 42′, snow has been seen to fall in the streets, during the prevalence of northerly winds. It contained, in 1803, a population of 18,000 souls. The town-house, the churches, and the convents are described as handsome; the *alameda*, or public walk, is boasted of for its beauty; and the town is supplied with water by an aqueduct, erected at the expense of Bishop Antonio de San Miguel, towards the end of the last century, and said to have cost 20,000*l*.

Tzintzontzan, the ancient capital of Mechoacan, though it still retains the title of city, is now only a poor Indian village, containing (in 1803) 2,500 inhabitants. It lies to the south-east of Valladolid, on the northern side of the lake of Pascuaco. The city which gives its name to the lake, is situated on the eastern bank, opposite to the Indian village of Janicho, which is built on a charming little island, at less than a league's distance, in the midst of the lake. Pascuaro contains the ashes of the first bishop of Mechoacan, Vasco de Quiroga, a distinguished benefactor of the Tarasc Indians, who died in 1556, at the village of Uruapa. His memory is held in the highest veneration by the natives, who still speak of him as their father (*Tata Don Vasco*). This city is 7,200 feet above the level of the sea, and contains 6,000 inhabitants.

In the eastern part of this intendancy there are considerable mines: they form four districts; *Angangueo*

(including the rich *real del Oro*), *Tlalpujahua* (or (*Tlapuxahua*), *Zitaquaro*, and *Inguaran*. They belong to the same groupe as the mines of Themascaltepec; but Humboldt gives no particular account of them.

The most remarkable feature of this intendancy is the volcano of Jorullo (Xorullo, or Juruyo), which has already been referred to as one of the most tremendous physical revolutions that ever took place on the surface of the globe. It is situated to the east of the Peak of Tancitaro, the most elevated summit in the intendancy, at the distance of more than forty-two leagues from any other volcano now in action. M. Humboldt, who, with his colleague, M. Bonpland, visited its crater in September 1803, gives the following account of this wonderful phenomenon.

"A vast plain extends from the hills of Aguasarco to near the villages of Teipa and Petatlan, both equally celebrated for their fine plantations of cotton. This plain, between the *Picachos del Mortero*, the *Cerro de las Cuevas*, and that of *Cuiche*, is only from 2,460 to 2,624 feet above the level of the sea. In the middle of a tract of ground in which porphyry with a base of grünstein predominates, basaltic cones appear, the summits of which are crowned with evergreen oaks of a laurel and olive foliage, intermingled with small palm-trees with flabelliform leaves. This beautiful vegetation forms a singular contrast with the aridity of the plain, which was laid waste by volcanic fire.

"Till the middle of the eighteenth century, fields cultivated with sugar-cane and indigo, occupied the extent of ground between the two brooks called Cuitamba and San Pedro. They were bounded by basaltic mountains, of which the structure seems to

indicate, that all this country at a very remote period had been already several times convulsed by volcanoes. These fields, watered by artificial means, belonged to the plantation (*hacienda*) of San Pedro de Jorullo, one of the greatest and richest of the country. In the month of June, 1759, a subterraneous noise was heard. Hollow noises of a most alarming nature (*bramidos*) were accompanied by frequent earthquakes, which succeeded one another for from fifty to sixty days, to the great consternation of the inhabitants of the *hacienda*. From the beginning of September, every thing seemed to announce the complete re-establishment of tranquillity, when, in the night between the 28th and 29th, the horrible subterraneous noise recommenced. The affrighted Indians fled to the mountains of Aguasarco. A tract of ground from three to four square miles in extent, which goes by the name of *Malpays*, rose up in the shape of a bladder. The bounds of this convulsion are still distinguishable in the fractured strata. The *Malpays*, near its edges, is only thirty-nine feet above the old level of the plain called the *Playas de Jorullo;* but the convexity of the ground thus thrown up, increases progressively towards the centre, to an elevation of 524 feet.

"Those who witnessed this great catastrophe from the top of Aguasarco, assert that flames were seen to issue forth for an extent of more than half a square league, that fragments of burning rocks were thrown up to prodigious heights, and that, through a thick cloud of ashes, illumined by the volcanic fire, the softened surface of the earth was seen to swell up like an agitated sea. The rivers of Cuitamba and San Pedro precipitated themselves into the burning chasms. The decomposition of the water contributed

to invigorate the flames, which were distinguishable at the city of Pascuaro, though situated on a very extensive table-land, 4,592 feet elevated above the plains (*las playas*) of Jorullo. Eruptions of mud, and especially of strata of clay, enveloping balls of decomposed basaltes in concentrical layers, appear to indicate that subterraneous water had no small share in producing this extraordinary revolution. Thousands of small cones, from six feet to nine feet in height, called by the natives, *ovens* (*hornitos*), issued forth from the *Malpays*. Although within the last fifteen years, according to the testimony of the Indians, the heat of these volcanic ovens has suffered a great diminution, I have seen the thermometer rise to 202° F. on being plunged into fissures which exhale an aqueous vapour. Each small cone is a *fumorola*, from which a thick vapour ascends to the height of from 30 to 50 feet. In many of them a subterraneous noise is heard, which appears to announce the proximity of a fluid in ebullition.

"In the midst of the ovens, six large masses, elevated from 1,312 to 1,640 feet each above the old level of the plains, sprang up from a chasm, of which the direction is from the N.N.E. to the S.S.E. This is the phenomenon of the Monte-novo of Naples, several times repeated in a range of volcanic hills. The most elevated of these enormous masses, which bears some resemblance to the *puys* de l'Auvergne, is the great Volcano of Jorullo. It is continually burning, and has thrown up from the north side an immense quantity of scorified and basaltic lavas, containing fragments of primitive rocks. These great eruptions of the central volcano continued till the month of February 1760. In the following years, they became gradually less frequent. The Indians, frightened at

the horrible noises of the new volcano, abandoned at first all the villages situated within seven or eight leagues distance of the plains of Jorullo. They became gradually, however, accustomed to this terrific spectacle; and having returned to their cottages, they advanced towards the mountains of Aguasarco and Santa Iñes, to admire the streams of fire discharged from an infinity of great and small volcanic apertures. The roofs of the houses of Queretaro were then covered with ashes, at a distance of more than forty-eight leagues in a straight line from the scene of the explosion. Although the subterraneous fire now appears far from violent, and the Malpays and the great volcano begin to be covered with vegetables, we nevertheless found the ambient air heated to such a degree by the action of the small ovens (*hornitos*), that the thermometer, at a great distance from the surface, and in the shade, rose as high as 109° F. This fact appears to prove that there is no exaggeration in the accounts of several old Indians, who affirm, that for many years after the first eruption, the plains of Jorullo, even at a great distance from the scene of the explosion, were uninhabitable, from the excessive heat which prevailed in them.

"The traveller is still shewn, near the Cerro de Santa Iñes, the rivers of Cuitamba and San Pedro, of which the limpid waters formerly watered the sugar-cane plantation of Don André Pimentel. These streams disappeared in the night of the 29th September, 1759; but, at a distance of 6,560 feet further west, in the tract which was the theatre of the convulsion, two rivers are now seen bursting through the argillaceous vault of the *hornitos*, of the appearance of mineral waters, in which the thermometer rises to 126° F. The Indians continue to give them the names

of San Pedro and Cuitamba, because, in several parts of the Malpays, great masses of water are heard to run in a direction from east to west, from the mountains of Santa Iñes towards *l'Hacienda de la Presentacion.* Near this habitation there is a brook, which disengages itself from the sulphureous hydrogen. It is more than twenty-two feet in breadth, and is the most abundant hydro-sulphureous spring which I have ever seen.

" In the opinion of the Indians, these extraordinary transformations which we have been describing, the surface of the earth raised up and burst by the volcanic fire, and the mountains of scoria and ashes heaped together, are the work of the monks, the greatest, no doubt, which they have ever produced in the two hemispheres ! In the cottage which we occupied in the plains of Jorullo, our Indian host related to us, that in 1759, Capuchin missionaries came to preach at the plantation of San Pedro, and not having met with a favourable reception, (perhaps not having got so good a dinner as they expected,) they poured out the most horrible and unheard-of imprecations against the then beautiful and fertile plain, and prophesied that, in the first place, the plantation would be swallowed up by flames rising out of the earth, and that afterwards, the ambient air would cool to such a degree, that the neighbouring mountains would for ever remain covered with snow and ice. The former of these maledictions having already produced such fatal effects, the lower Indians contemplate, in the increasing coolness of the volcano, the sinister presage of a perpetual winter. I have thought proper to relate this vulgar tradition, worthy of figuring in the epic poem of the Jesuit Landivar, because it forms a striking feature in the picture of the manners and

prejudices of these remote countries. It proves the active industry of a class of men who too frequently abuse the credulity of the people, and pretend to suspend by their influence the immutable laws of nature, for the sake of founding their empire on the fear of physical evils."

So little was known of this country prior to the visit of this admirable Traveller, that, although this catastrophe took place not seventy years ago, and within six days' journey of the capital of Mexico, it had remained altogether unknown to the mineralogists and naturalists of Europe. It is remarkable, M. Humboldt observes, that this new volcano was formed in a direction parallel with the line, running east and west, in which all the elevated summits of Anahuac are found, that rise into the region of perpetual snow, and which are either active volcanoes, or peaks apparently of volcanic character. Thus, between lat. 18° 59′ and 19° 12′,* receding from the Atlantic coast, we find the peak of Orizaba, the two volcanoes of Puebla, the *nevado* of Toluca, the peak of Tancitaro, the volcano of Jorullo, and lastly, that of Colima. These great elevations, instead of forming the crest of the Cordillera, traverse the great chain which forms the table-land. In connexion with this curious fact, it is mentioned, that, from the lake of Cuiseo in this intendancy, which is impregnated with muriate of soda, and exhales sulphuretted hydrogen, to the city of Valladolid, an extent of forty square leagues, there are a great number of hot wells, which generally contain only muriatic acid, without any traces of earthy

* The volcano of Tuxtla, mentioned vol. i. p. 227, is rather to the south of this line, according to Humboldt's map, and he omits it in his enumeration in this place; yet, its position serves to confirm the general observation.

sulphates or metallic salts. Such are the mineral waters of Chucandiro, Cuinche, San Sebastian, and San Juan Tararamco. From these indications of volcanic action in this particular region, Humboldt infers, that there probably exists in this part of Mexico, at a great depth in the heart of the earth, a chasm, in a direction from east to west, and for a length of 137 leagues, along which the volcanic fire, bursting through the interior crust of the porphyritic rocks, has at different epochs made its appearance. "Does this chasm," he adds as a query, "extend to the small groupe of islands called the Archipelago of Revillagigedo, around which, in the same parallel with the Mexican volcanoes, pumice-stone has been seen floating?"

The most southern intendancy of Mexico, and one of the most valuable portions of the empire, is the intendancy of

OAXACA.

This fine province, from which Cortes took his title of marquis (*del Valle de Oaxaca*), derives its name from the Mexican city and valley of *Huaxyacac*, one of the principal places of the Zapotec country, and almost as considerable as Teotzapotlan, their capital. It is bounded, on the north, by Vera Cruz; on the east, by Guatimala; on the west, by Puebla; and on the south, for eleven leagues of coast, by the Pacific Ocean. Its extent of surface exceeds that of Bohemia and Moravia together, being 4,447 square leagues. Its population in 1803, was 534,800, being only 120 inhabitants to the square league, which is one-seventh below the average number in the

nine intendancies south of the tropic, but relatively equal to the population of European Russia. According to Humboldt's description of its physical advantages, however, this province may be expected to advance very rapidly in improvement and population under a liberal and patriotic government. "The intendancy of Oaxaca," he says, "is one of the most delightful countries in this part of the globe. The beauty and salubrity of the climate, the fertility of the soil, and the richness and variety of its productions, all minister to the prosperity of the inhabitants; and this province has accordingly been, from the remotest period, the centre of an advanced civilisation. The vegetation is beautiful and vigorous throughout the province, and especially half way down the declivity of the table-land, in the temperate region, where the rains are very copious from May to October. This intendancy alone has preserved the cultivation of the cochineal (*coccus cacti*), a branch of industry which it formerly shared with Puebla and New Galicia." The mines are not very considerable: hitherto, at least, they have not proved very productive. Those which have been worked with the greatest care, are those of Villalta, Zolaga, Ixtepexi, and Totomistla. They are all included in one *deputacion*, or mining district, and form the eighth groupe in Humboldt's classification, extending from lat. 16° 40′ to 18° N., and from long. 98° 15′ to 99° 50′ W. The annual produce he was unable to ascertain, and it is set down as doubtful.

The geological structure of the mountain districts singularly differs from that which is observed in Puebla, Mexico, and Valladolid. In place of the strata of basalt, porphyry, and amygdaloid, which are found from the eighteenth to the twenty-second

parallel, the mountains of Mixteca and Zapoteca are composed of granite and gneiss. The elevation of their highest summits is not known; but, from the *Cerro de Senpualtepec*, near Villalta, which is considered as one of the most elevated, both oceans are visible. This extent of horizon would only indicate, however, Humboldt says, an elevation of 7,700 feet. The same sight may also be obtained at *La Ginetta*, twelve leagues from the port of Tehuantepec, on the great road from Mexico to Guatimala.

Oaxaca (sometimes written Guaxaca), the provincial capital, built on the site of the ancient Huaxyacac, was called Antequera at the beginning of the conquest. Mr. Robinson describes it as "the neatest, cleanest, and most regularly built city in the kingdom." "The edifices are constructed with a green stone, which preserves its colour to perpetuity, and gives the city an appearance of freshness, such as we have never seen in any other. The convent of San Francisco, built more than 200 years ago, looks at this day as if it had just come from the hands of the architect. Streams of the purest water flow through all the streets; and in all the squares, are beautiful public fountains. The fruits both of the torrid and the temperate zones are to be seen every day in the market-place. We have seen on one side of the road, trees loaded with oranges, and on the other, fields of wheat. The climate of this city is considered as equal to that of any other in New Spain: the thermometer rarely falls below 63°, nor ranges higher than 78°. The inhabitants are well made and remarkable for longevity. The women are likewise distinguished for their beauty and vivacity."* According to the imperfect census of 1792,

* Robinson's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 152.

the population of this city was 24,000,* but this can be regarded as merely an approximation to the actual number. The territory of the marquisate of Cortes, comprising 4 *villas* and 49 *pueblos*, was computed to contain 17,700 inhabitants. Mr. Robinson states, that the most populous Indian villages in all Mexico are found in this province, but he furnishes no details. "Along the coast," he adds, "the climate is destructive of health; but the greater part of the province, particularly the mountains of the Misteca, is famed for its pure and salubrious air."

The district of Mixteca, the ancient Mixtecapan, formed, prior to the conquest, a distinct territory, inhabited by a race differing from the Indians of Zapoteca, the south-eastern part of the intendancy. It is divided into Upper (*alta*) and Lower (*baxa*) Mixteca. The Indians of this district are described by Humboldt as an "active, intelligent, and industrious people." On the road from Orizaba to Oaxaca, is the town of *San Antonio de los Cues*, "a very populous place, and celebrated for the remains of ancient Mexican fortifications."

The district of Zapoteca contains one of the most remarkable monuments of ancient civilisation in all Mexico, "*the palace of Mitla*;" a name contracted from *Miguitlan*, which signifies in the Aztec, "place of wo." "This term," says the learned Traveller so often cited, "seems to have been well chosen for a site so savage and lugubrious, that, according to the testimony of travellers, the warbling of birds is there

* Mr. Robinson states that, according to a census taken in 1808, the province contains 600,000 inhabitants; the city, 38,000; and the number of cities, towns, and villages, exceeds 800. "We have visited," he says, "several villages containing 6 and 7000 inhabitants;" yet not one-eighth part of the province is under cultivation.

scarcely ever heard. The Tzapotec Indians call these ruins *Leoba* or *Luiva* (burial, or tomb), alluding to the excavations found beneath the walls." This elegant ruin is about ten leagues distant from Oaxaca, on the road to Tehuantepec. It is of unknown antiquity. According to the tradition of the natives, which is confirmed by the distribution of its parts, it was "a palace constructed over the tombs of the kings," to which, it is supposed, the monarch retired on the death of a son, a wife, or a brother. "The tombs of Mitla consist of three edifices symmetrically placed in an extremely romantic situation. The principal edifice, which is in the best preservation, is nearly 130 feet in length. A stair, formed in a pit, leads to a subterranean apartment, 88 feet long by 26. This gloomy apartment, as well as the exterior walls of the edifice, is covered with *à la grecque* and *arabesque* ornaments. But what distinguishes the ruins of Mitla from all the other remains of Mexican architecture, is, six porphyry columns, which are placed in the midst of a vast hall, and support the ceiling. These columns, almost the only ones found in the New Continent, bear strong marks of the infancy of the art. They have neither base nor capital. Only a simple contraction of the upper part is observable. Their total height is nearly nineteen feet; the shaft of each is of a single piece of porphyry; but broken fragments for ages heaped together, conceal more than a third of the height of these columns." The ceiling which they served to support, was formed of beams of savine wood, three of which are still in good preservation. "The roof consisted of very large slabs."

According to a plan of the palace, drawn by a Mexican artist, Don Luis Martin, there originally existed at Mitla, five separate buildings, disposed

with great regularity. "A very large gate, some vestiges of which are still to be seen, led to a spacious court, 150 feet square. Heaps of earth and remains of subterraneous structures indicate that four small edifices of oblong form surrounded this court. That on the right is in a state of tolerable preservation, and the remains of two columns still exist. In the principal edifice, we distinguish, first, a terrace, raised three or four feet above the level of the court, and surrounding the walls, to which it served at the same time as a base; secondly, a niche formed in the wall, between four and five feet above the level of the hall with pillars. This niche, which is broader than it is high, is supposed to have enclosed an idol. The principal door of the hall is covered with a stone twelve feet long by three. Next, after entering the inner court, is seen the well, or opening of the tomb. A very broad staircase leads to the excavation, which is in the form of a cross, supported by columns. The two galleries, which intersect each other at right angles, are each eighty-two feet long by twenty-five. Lastly, three small apartments surround the inner court, and behind the niche is a fourth, with which they have no communication. The different parts of this edifice present very striking inequalities and a want of symmetry. In the interior of the apartments are paintings representing weapons, trophies, and sacrifices. There is no appearance of their having ever had windows."

"The *arabesques* (with which the exterior walls are covered) form a kind of mosaic work, composed of several square stones (of porphyry), placed with much dexterity by the side of each other. The mosaic is attached to a mass of clay, which appears to fill up the inside of the walls, as is also observed in some

Peruvian edifices. The length of these walls on the same line, is only about 130 feet; their height probably never exceeded fifteen or sixteen feet. This edifice, however, though small, might produce some effect by the arrangement of its parts, and the elegant form of its ornaments. Several of the Egyptian temples are of still less considerable dimensions. In the environs of Mitla are remains of a great pyramid, and some other buildings very much resembling these."

"The Greek ornaments of the palace of Mitla present, no doubt," continues M. Humboldt, "a striking analogy to those of the vases of lower Italy, and to others which we find spread over the surface of almost the whole of the Old Continent. We perceive in them the same design which we admire in the vases falsely called Tuscan (Etruscan?), or in the frieze of the ancient temple near the grotto of Egeria at Rome." But the perfection of these ornaments, he contends, "is no indication of any great progress of civilisation in the people among whom they are found. M. Krusenstern gives a description of arabesques of great elegance, fixed, by means of tattooing, on the skins of the most savage inhabitants of Washington's Islands."* Without running into hypothesis, however, the ornaments in question, and the whole style of the building, are so little in unison with the character of the Mex-

* Pol. Essay, vol. ii. pp. 191—4. Researches, vol. ii. pp. 152—9. The learned Author promises to give a further account of these interesting remains in his personal narrative; but that portion of it relating to New Spain, has never as yet made its appearance. He does not, however, seem to have visited Mitla himself. The drawing given in the Picturesque Atlas, was communicated by Don Luis Martin. The whole of this district merits the particular attention of the future traveller. We should have been glad to give a view of this interesting site, but Humboldt's plate exhibits only some fragments of wall.

ican *teocallis*, that they would seem to justify our referring them to a people of distinct origin. M. Humboldt thinks it scarcely probable, that the edifice is of a date anterior to the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Possibly, a further examination may throw some light on its comparative antiquity. It will deserve also to be ascertained, whether the excavation be natural or wholly artificial. The "great pyramid," of the existence of which we are somewhat sceptical, claims particular attention; and it will be important to ascertain, what apparent analogy there is between the ruins of Mitla and those of Palenque, and other ancient remains in the kingdom of Guatimala; particularly the cavern of Mixco in the valley of Xilopetec, the entrance to which is stated to have a "Doric portico."

An interesting natural curiosity is found at the village of *Santa Maria del Tule*, three leagues east of Oaxaca, between Santa Lucia and Tlacochiguaya. It is an ancient cypress (*cupressus disticha*), the trunk of which is still larger than that of the cypress of Atlixco,* measuring nearly 120 feet in circumference. On a minute examination, however, its enormous bulk is found to be composed of three trunks that have grown together.

The only port in this intendancy mentioned by Humboldt, is that of Tehuantepec or Teguantepec, situated at the bottom of a creek formed by the ocean between the small villages of San Francisco, San Dionisio, and Santa Maria de la Mar. "This port," says Humboldt, "though impeded by a very dangerous bar, will become one day of great consequence, when navigation in general, and especially the exportation

* See vol. i. p. 250.

of the indigo of Guatimala, shall become more frequent by the *Rio Guasacualco.*" As a port, it hardly deserves the name: none but small vessels can pass the bar, and without, they are exposed in an open roadstead. The sands brought down by the river Chimalapa, increase the bar every year, and the town of Tehuantepec is now four leagues from the sea. But it is at this part of the isthmus, between the bay of Tehuantepec and the port of Guasacualco, that the continent is narrowest, the distance from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean not exceeding 45 leagues.* The isthmus of Tehuantepec comprises, under the parallel of 16° N., the sources of the Guasacualco (or Huasacualco), which discharges itself into the Gulf of Mexico, and those of the Chimalapa, which mingles its waters with the Southern Ocean near the *Barra de San Francisco.* The approximation of the sources of these two rivers, (which, according to Mr. Robinson, are within five leagues of each other,) suggested to the patriotic viceroy, Count de Revillagigedo, the project of a canal to connect the two seas. A fortunate accident, Humboldt informs us, towards the end of the last century, was the means of directing the attention of the Mexican Government to this part of the isthmus.

"There was discovered, in 1771, at Vera Cruz, amongst the artillery of the castle of San Juan de Ulua, several pieces of cannon, cast at Manilla. As it was known that, before the year 1767, the Spaniards neither doubled the Cape of Good Hope nor Cape Horn, in their voyage to the Philippine Islands, and that since the first expeditions of Magellan and Loysa, who

* Mr. Robinson states the latitude of Guasacualco loosely at about 18° 30′; that of Tehuantepec at about 16° 36′.

set out from Spain, all the commerce of Asia was carried on in the Galleon of Acapulco, they could not conceive how these guns had crossed the continent of Mexico on their way from Manilla to the Castle of Ulua. The extreme difficulty of the road from Acapulco to Mexico, and from thence to Xalapa and Vera Cruz, rendered it very improbable that they should come by that way. In the course of their investigations, they learned both from the chronicle of Tehuantepec * written by Father Burgoa, and from the traditions preserved among the inhabitants of the Isthmus of Huasacualco, that these guns were cast at the Island of Luzon, and landed at the Bar of San Francisco; that they had ascended the bay of Santa Teresa, and the Rio Chimalapa; that they had been carried by the farm of Chivela and the forest of Tarifa to the Rio del Malpasso; and that, after having been again embarked, they descended the Rio Huasacualco, to its mouth in the Gulf of Mexico.

"It was then very reasonably observed, that this road, which had been frequented in the beginning of the conquest, might still become very useful for the opening a direct communication between the two seas. The viceroy, Don Antonio Bucareli, gave orders to two able engineers, Don Augustin Cramer and Don Miguel del Corral, to examine with the greatest minuteness, the country between the Bar of Huasacualco and the road of Tehuantepec; and he instructed them at the same time to verify whether, as was vaguely supposed, among the small rivers of Ostuta, Chicapa, or Chimalapa, there was none which in any of its branches communicated with the two seas. From the itinerary

* "Burgoa, Palestra Historial o Cronica de la Villa de Tehuantepec. Mexico, 1674."

journals of these two engineers, of whom the former was lieutenant of the castle of Ulua, I drew up my map of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. They found that no river discharged at the same time its waters into the South Sea and the Atlantic Ocean; that the Rio Huasacualco did not take its rise, as the viceroy had been informed, near the town of Tehuantepec; and that, on ascending it beyond the cataract, even as far as the old *desembarcadero* of Malpasso, they were still more than twenty-six leagues distant from the shores of the South Sea. They observed that a chain of mountains, of very inconsiderable height, divides the waters between the gulf of Mexico and the gulf of Tehuantepec. This small cordillera stretches from east to west, from the Cerros de los Mixes, formerly inhabited by a wild and warlike tribe * towards the elevated table-land of Portilla de Petapa. The engineer, Cramer, affirms, however, that to the south of the village of Santa Maria de Chimalapa, the mountains form a groupe rather than an uninterrupted chain, and 'that there exists a transversal valley, in which a canal of communication might be cut between the two seas.' This canal, which would unite the Rio de Chimalapa with the Rio del Passo (or Malpasso), would be only six leagues in length. The boats would ascend the Rio Chimalapa, which affords a very easy navigation from Tehuantepec to the village of San Miguel; and from thence, they would pass by the canal projected in the time of Count de Revillagigedo, to the Rio del Passo. This river discharges itself into the Rio de Huasacualco near the *Bodegas de la Fabrica;* but its navigation is extremely difficult on account of the seven rapids (*raudales*) which are

* "Cartas de Cortez, p. 372."

counted between its source and the mouth of the Rio de Saravia.

"It would be of infinite importance again to order this ground to be examined by intelligent engineers, to determine whether, as was believed by M. Cramer, the *canal between the two seas* can be executed without locks, or without *inclined planes*, and whether, by blowing up the rocks with powder, the beds of the rivers Passo and Chimalapa can be deepened. The Isthmus is rich in cattle, and would, from its great fertility, supply valuable productions for the commerce of Vera Cruz. The fine plains of Tehuantepec would be susceptible of irrigation from the Rio de Chimalapa: in their present state, they produce a little indigo and cochineal of a superior quality.

"Before setting on foot, in the Islands of Cuba and Pinos, the felling of cedar and acajou wood (*cedrela odorata* and *swietenia mahogany*), the dock-yards of the Havannah drew their wood for ship-building from the thick forest which covers the northern slope of the Cerros de Petapa and Tarifa. The Isthmus of Tehuantepec was at that time very much frequented, and the ruins of several houses which are still to be seen on the two banks of the river Huasacualco, are to be dated back to that period. The cedar and acajou wood was embarked at the Bodegas de Malpasso.

"To avoid the seven rapids of the Rio del Passo, a new port (*desembarcadero*) was established in 1798, at the mouth of the Rio de Saravia: the salt provisions (*tasajo*) of Tehuantepec, the indigo of Guatimala, and the cochineal of Oaxaca, were conveyed by this way to Vera Cruz and the Havannah. A road has been opened from Tehuantepec, by Chihuitan, Llano Grande, Santa Maria Petapa, and Guchicovi, to the new port of La Cruz. They reckon this road thirty-four

leagues. The productions destined for the Havannah do not descend to the mouth of the Rio Huasacualco, or to the small port of that name, because they are afraid of exposing their canoes to the north winds, during the long passage from the bar of Huasacualco to the port of Vera Cruz. They disembark the goods at the Passo de la Fabrica; and from thence they are conveyed on the backs of mules, by the village of Acayucan to the banks of the river San Juan, where they are again embarked in large canoes, and transported by the bar of Tlacatalpan to the port of Vera Cruz."

By this road, which was completed in the year 1800, the river Guasacualco forms a commercial communication, though an imperfect one, between the two oceans. When Spain was at war with Great Britain, the indigo of Guatimala was brought by way of this isthmus to the port of Vera Cruz, whence it was exported to Europe; but the carriage of goods on the back of mules, from Tehuantepec to Vera Cruz, by Oaxaca, was, in 1804, as high as thirty piasters (*6l. 6s.*) per load; and the muleteers took three months in accomplishing the journey, though the distance is not 75 leagues in a straight line. By way of the isthmus and the river Guasacualco, Humboldt states, nearly half the expense of carriage, and seventy days, might be saved.

The mouth of the Guasacualco has already been referred to as one of the four points to which it was proposed to transfer the commerce of Vera Cruz;* and it would seem to be by far the most eligible. The inhabitants of Oaxaca have long been bent on this favourite object. So far back as the year 1745, a memorial was presented to the viceroy by several distin-

* Vol. i. p. 354.

guished Creoles, praying him to represent to the court of Madrid, the immense benefits to the kingdom that would result from making Guasacualco a port of entry, and the grand commercial depôt, instead of Vera Cruz. This memorial, a copy of which Mr. Robinson saw when at Oaxaca, in 1816, after giving a topographical description of the isthmus, and expatiating on the beauty and fertility of the country, explicitly declares, that the projected canal is a feasible measure. It then goes on to state, that, should *political reasons* forbid its formation, a road might be cut across the ridge, by which property could be transported in carriages at a moderate expense. The memorial was transmitted to the Spanish Government; but "the Cadiz monopolists and the Philippine Company viewed with alarm a project that threatened to divert the trade out of its ordinary channels. The mercantile establishments they had formed at Acapulco and Vera Cruz, and the expensive edifices they had erected at those places, would become valueless in proportion as this should be effected. These parties, therefore, and their agents in Mexico, put in action every engine of intrigue in order to defeat the wishes of the Oaxaca memorialists. The memorial was placed among the secret royal archives at Madrid; that is, it was laid on the shelf of oblivion; and the only notice ever bestowed on it, was an order from the Court, prohibiting the parties from ever reviving the subject under pain of the royal displeasure; and severely reprimanding, or stigmatising the Oaxaca memorialists, as audacious innovators of the established regulations and commerce of the kingdom."* The Count de Revillagigedo himself is stated to have incurred the

* Robinson's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 301.

displeasure of the cabinet, by favouring the project of a water communication between the two rivers.

The harbour of Guasacualco is stated by Mr. Robinson to be the most spacious and secure of any on the Atlantic coast. "It is," he says, "the only port in the Mexican Gulf, where vessels of war and others of a large size can enter,* and is far superior either to Pensacola or Espiritu Santo. There are, at all seasons, on the bar at the mouth of the port, twenty-two feet water; and it is said, that, during the flood of the river, the bar occasionally shifts, and affords passages in five and six fathoms water. Some years ago, a Spanish ship of the line, called the Asia, crossed the bar of Guasacualco, and anchored in the port. The river is navigable for vessels of the largest size, to within twelve leagues of the navigable waters of the Chimalapa and Tehuantepec. The latter river admits vessels drawing twenty feet water. It was on this river that Cortes constructed ships, when he sent Pedro de Alvarado to conquer Guatimala." The expedition of Fernando de Grixalva to California, in 1534, sailed also from Tehuantepec; and in like manner, the vessels in which Cortes embarked at Chametla, in the following year, were constructed at the mouth of the Chimalapa, of materials brought by the river Guasacualco; so early had this part of the coast attracted the attention of the Spaniards. One of these vessels was lost in crossing the bar of St. Francis, on leaving the *laguna* of Santa Theresa. The topography

* See p. 24 of the present volume. This gentleman mentions, on hearsay information, a port, which he calls *Matagorda*, as the best to the north of Vera Cruz: it is, he says, in lat. 28° 30′, about half way between the rivers Sabine and Del Norte, and has twenty feet on the bar. No such port is mentioned by Humboldt, but he confesses that this part of the coast had never been accurately explored. The latitude is that of the entrance to the Bay of St. Bernard.

of the isthmus of Tehuantepec, however, Humboldt remarks, (and he might have added, the hydrography of the whole coast,) is altogether unknown in Europe. The memorial of the Oaxacan citizens speaks of a number of valuable ports on the coast of this intendancy, which are set down, indeed, in Humboldt's map, but respecting which nothing is known. They particularly mention, Mr. Robinson says, besides Tehuantepec, San Diego, Santa Cruz de Guatulco, Cacalutla, San Augustin, Puerto de los Angeles, Escondido, and the bay of Mazuntla. "The port of Escondido (hidden port) has," it is added, "a narrow but excellent entrance, which is only discovered on a very near approach to the coast; it is as spacious as Acapulco, and would afford perfectly secure moorings for hundreds of vessels. It could easily be fortified, so as to render it impregnable to external attacks. The port of Santa Cruz de Guatulco, likewise, is equal to any on the shores of the Pacific, and is situated only 35 leagues S. of the city of Oaxaca."

Of the feasibleness of a canal between the two rivers, this Traveller entertains little doubt. By some extraordinary convulsion of nature, he states, vast chasms or ravines have been formed among the mountains which traverse the isthmus; and during the rainy season, these chasms contain a vast body of water, which seeks its discharge by rivers flowing into either ocean. "The Indians of the isthmus, particularly those of Tabasco and Tehuantepec, assert that they pass with their canoes entirely through the isthmus. We endeavoured, while at Oaxaca, to ascertain this fact, and are convinced, that when the waters are at their height during the rainy season, a canoe may pass, by the sinuosities of the ravines, from the Guasacualco to the rivers Chimalapa and Tehuan-

tepec. We will not positively assert that a navigable canal may be formed so as to unite the waters of these three rivers, but we believe it practicable." No doubt, however, he adds, can exist, "that a good carriage road might be made, of from twelve to fourteen leagues, along the sides of the mountains, by which every species of merchandise could be transported with ease, in a few hours, from the waters of the Chimalapa to those of the Guasacualco." By this means, the passage of the isthmus might, he calculates, be effected in less than six days. A steam-vessel could perform the voyage from Tehuantepec to Canton, in less than 50 days, and might get from the same port to the mouth of Colombia river, in from 18 to 24 days. The voyage from Philadelphia to Guasacualco would occupy six days. Thus, by means of steam-boat navigation, Mr. R. reckons, that a voyage from the United States to China might be performed in less than sixty-three days, the route being shortened by a fourth; and from Philadelphia to Colombia river, on the north-west coast, in from thirty to thirty-six days, a distance being saved of more than two-thirds. These calculations would at one time have appeared extremely visionary: they now require only to be verified.

The population of Tehuantepec, Mr. Robinson adds, are among the most active and healthy race of Indians in the country. "The Indian females may properly be styled the Circassians of Southern (Central) America. Their piercing eyes give to their countenance an extraordinary animation; their long black hair is neatly plaited, and adorned with combs, made of gold or tortoise-shell; while the celerity and grace of their movements strike a stranger with astonishment. They are very industrious, and manufacture nearly all their own clothing. They are remarkable for their cleanli-

ness, and are fond of bathing." The Spanish Government, during the recent revolution, looked upon these Indians with a jealous eye, in consequence of their known predilection for the insurgents. The vicinity of the town to the sea-coast, and its being situated on a navigable river, were circumstances that gave the Government much uneasiness, because they were aware, that if a foreign enemy should land on the coast of Oaxaca, they would be received with open arms by the Indians of Tehuantepec, and, indeed, by the greater part of the population of the whole province.

The intendancy of Oaxaca, continues Mr. Robinson, "not only possesses an immense population, but is of the highest importance for its valuable productions. It is the region of New Spain that appears the most favourable to the production of the important article of cochineal. In no other part of Mexico does the *nopal* (on which tree the cochineal insect subsists) flourish so well. Its propagation has been unsuccessfully attempted in various other provinces; but not only do the climate and soil appear peculiarly adapted to this plant in Oaxaca, but the Indians have, by a long course of practice, acquired so much experience in the manner of cultivating the nopal, and collecting the insects, as to preclude all rivalship in any of the other provinces. In some years there have been produced, in Oaxaca, four hundred thousand pounds weight of cochineal: this is worth in Europe, even during peace, about one million six hundred thousand dollars. During war, it has frequently sold in England at twenty-five shillings sterling per pound. The poor Indian who collects this precious commodity, barters it for manufactured goods to the Spanish shop-keepers in the villages. The extortion of these men, together with

the exactions of the Government and the priesthood, leave to the Indian a miserable return for his care and industry; but we have no doubt, that if these unjust and unnatural restrictions on the labour of the natives were removed, the intendancy of Oaxaca would, in a very few years, produce above a million of pounds of cochineal per annum.

"The mountains of this intendancy, particularly those of the Misteca, are likewise peculiarly adapted to the growth of the mulberry-tree. Many years ago, the experiment was made, and it succeeded so well, that it awakened the jealousy of the European Spaniards; and they created so many obstacles to the manufacturing of silk in Oaxaca, that the Indians became exasperated, and *in one night* destroyed every mulberry-tree in the intendancy; since which time no attempts have been made to renew its culture.

"The indigo of the district of Tehuantepec, is superior in quality to that of Guatimala; but, as there are no ports open to foreign commerce along the coast of the Pacific Ocean, in the vicinity of Tehuantepec, nor, indeed, on any part of the coast of Oaxaca, the inhabitants have not been stimulated either to the culture of that, or of the cotton-plant, or of the sugar-cane, except so far as is absolutely necessary to supply their own immediate consumption.

"In all the mountainous districts of Oaxaca, and more especially in the spacious valleys which are situated from twenty-five hundred to six thousand feet above the level of the sea, we find a soil and climate at least equal, if not superior, to any on the globe. There is not a single article raised in the temperate zone, that would not here find a congenial region. Wheat and all kinds of grain yield a return to the cultivator, equal to that of the most fertile parts of

Europe. The fruits and vegetables of Oaxaca are unrivalled for luxuriance and delicacy. Peaches, pears, apricots, and strawberries, are here to be found of a size and flavour superior to those of the south of France; and the variety and excellence of the grape point out the valleys of Oaxaca as the great future vineyards of New Spain. Asparagus, artichokes, turnips, cabbages, and all the various productions of horticulture, grow to a size and perfection we have never beheld elsewhere.

"To all these important natural advantages of this favoured country, must be added that of its mineral productions. Some of the most valuable gold mines of New Spain are in this province; but they have not yet been extensively worked, inasmuch as the attention of the directors of the mining establishments in Mexico has been principally directed to the mines of Guanaxuato, and of other provinces, silver mines being considered more profitable than those of gold. The Indians of the Upper and Lower Misteca, as well as those of the district of Tehuantepec, collect grains of gold in the beds of the rivulets that flow through the mountains; and larger masses of gold have been found in Oaxaca, than in any other part of New Spain. Indications of silver ore are, likewise, discoverable in all the mountainous districts; but as yet, scarcely any attention has been paid to them. In fact, there cannot be a doubt that this province abounds in all the precious minerals; and when the use of machinery shall be introduced, and the restrictions on human industry and enterprise be removed, this province will yield as much gold and silver as any other in America. It is worthy of remark, likewise, that copper and iron ore have been found in different parts of Oaxaca. In the village of *Yanhuitlan*, there is a

large piece of metal, which the blacksmiths of the place use as an anvil. It was found on the summit of a hill near the village, and is of an extraordinary weight for its dimensions. Various attempts have been made to fuse it, but it has resisted the most intense heat."

This mass of metal is termed, in some manuscript notes, drawn up by generals Teran and Bustamente, *platina;* a metal which, according to Humboldt, has never yet been discovered in any part of America north of Panama. Mr. Robinson says: "The mineralogists will of course pronounce it to be impossible, and we are content." Whatever the metal may be, the fact is curious, and the statements of this intelligent American, being drawn from native sources, merit attention. It will not be long before the topography of this valuable province will be better known to us. No part of Mexico is more accessible than this province. According to Mr. Robinson, an army could march in 48 hours from the port of Guasacualco to the table-land of Oaxaca. We trust that no invading army will ever be allowed to make such an experiment; but British and American merchants and travellers may ere long be able to report as to the practicability of the route.

It only remains to give some account of the great peninsula of Yucatan, situated between the bays of Campeachy and Honduras, which forms the intendancy of

MERIDA.

THIS province, which is separated, on the south-west, by the *Rio Baraderas* or *de los Lagartos* (lizards),*

* The mouth of this river is stated to be in lat. 21° 34′ N.; long. 90° 30′ 15″ W. of Paris.

from the intendancy of Vera Cruz, is bounded on the south by Chiapa and Vera Paz in Guatimala; and on the west, by the English establishments, which extend along the eastern coast, from the mouth of the river Hondo to the north of Hanover Bay, opposite the island of Ubero (Ambergris key). Cape Catoche, its north-eastern point (in lat. 21° 30′), is only 51 leagues distant from Cape San Antonio, the western extremity of the island of Cuba, which is supposed at a remote period to have formed part of the American continent. The northern coast of Yucatan is observed to follow exactly the direction of the "current of rotation" or gulf stream. The peninsula consists of a vast plain, intersected from N.E. to S.W. by a chain of hills of small elevation. "The country which extends east from these hills towards the bays of Ascension and Espiritu Santo, appears to be the most fertile part, and was the earliest inhabited. The ruins of European edifices in the island of Cozumel,* in the midst of a grove of palm-trees, indicate that that island, now uninhabited, was, at the commencement of the conquest, peopled by Spanish colonists. Since the settlement of the English between Omoa and the Rio Hondo, the Government, to diminish the contraband trade, concentrated the Spanish and Indian population in that part of the peninsula which is west of the mountains of Yucatan. Colonists are not permitted to settle on the eastern coast, on the banks of the Rio Bacalar and Rio Hondo; and all this vast country remains uninhabited, with the exception of the *presidio* of Salamanca."

The extent of the intendancy of Merida, is stated at nearly 6000 square leagues; the population, in 1803,

* See vol. i. p. 6.

at 465,800, being only 81 to the square league; and this in one of the healthiest, though one of the warmest provinces of equinoctial America. This calculation, however, does not include the several Indian tribes who have preserved their independence in the southern part of the mountain district, which is rendered almost inaccessible by thick forests and the luxuriance of tropical vegetation. The only towns in this intendancy mentioned by Humboldt, are Merida, Campeche, and Valladolid.

Merida de Yucatan, the provincial capital, is situated ten leagues in the interior, in the midst of an arid plain: the population is estimated at 10,000. Its small port is called Sizal, situated to the west of Chaboana, opposite a sand-bank nearly twelve leagues in length, in lat. 21° 19′ N., long. 92° 19′. 45″ W. of Paris. Campeche has a resident population of 6000. The port, formed by the mouth of the Rio de San Francisco, is not very secure, and vessels are obliged to anchor a great way from the shore. It derives its name from two words in the *Maya* language; *cam* signifying serpent, and *peche*, the *garapata* insect (acarus), both of which, it may be inferred, annoy the inhabitants. It stands in lat. 19° 50′ 45″ N., long. 92° 50′ 45″ W. Between Campeche and Merida are two very considerable Indian villages, called Xampolan and Equetchecan. Valladolid is a small town, surrounded with extensive cotton-plantations.

The chief exports, besides the famous Campeche wood, are cotton and wax. The trees which furnish this wood, *(hæmatoxylon campechianum,)* grow in abundance in several districts of this intendancy. The cutting takes place once a year, on the banks of the river Champoton, the mouth of which is to the south of Campeche, within four leagues

of the small village of Lerma. "It is only with the special permission of the intendant of Merida," Humboldt says, "that the merchant can from time to time cut down Campeche wood to the east of the mountains, near the bays of Ascension, Todos los Santos, and Espiritu Santo, where the English carry on an extensive and lucrative contraband trade." After being cut down, the wood must dry for a year, before it can be sent to Vera Cruz, the Havannah, or Cadiz. The tree is not peculiar to Yucatan and Honduras, but is found scattered throughout the forests of the equinoctial regions, wherever the mean temperature of the air is not below 71° of Fahrenheit. The climate of Merida does not admit of the cultivation of European grain, but the inhabitants cultivate maize and the manioc root.

Humboldt attributes the salubrity of the climate in this intendancy to the extreme dryness of the soil and atmosphere. From Campeche to Cape Catoche, the navigator does not find a single spring of fresh water; but, on the northern coast, a very remarkable phenomenon occurs. At the mouth of the Rio de los Lagartos, 1300 feet from the shore, springs of fresh water spout up from amidst the salt water. They are called the *boccas* (mouths) *de Conil.* The learned Traveller supposes that, by some strong hydrostatic pressure, the fresh water, after bursting the calcareous rock, between the clefts of which it has flowed, is made to rise above the level of the salt water. The same phenomenon is found in the bay of Xagua, off the Island of Cuba.

The name of New Spain was at first given (in 1518) only to the peninsula of Yucatan. Grijalva, who landed here the year before the expedition of Cortes, was astonished at the cultivation of the fields and the beauty of the Indian edifices. Cortes afterwards

extended the name to the whole empire of Montezuma. Yucatan was never subject, however, to the Aztec sultans. The first conquerors were struck with the advanced civilisation of the inhabitants. They found houses built of stone, cemented with lime, pyramidal edifices (*teocallis*), which they compared to Moorish mosques, fields enclosed with hedges, and the people clothed. Many ruins, particularly of sepulchral monuments, are still to be discovered to the east of the small central chain of mountains. The language spoken by the Indians of this intendancy is the Maya, which is extremely guttural, and of which there exist four tolerably complete dictionaries. The intendant of Merida bore the title of captain-general of Yucatan, and appears to have been in some degree independent of the viceroy, it being recognised as a distinct territory.

We have now completed our survey of the twelve intendancies and the three provinces into which, by the latest arrangement under the colonial system, Mexico was divided. We have been compelled to adhere to that arrangement, and to preserve the name of intendancies, although, by the recent political changes, these terms have been rendered obsolete, and the distribution of the provinces has been somewhat modified. The present arrangement, however, can hardly be considered as definitive. For instance, the interior eastern provinces will not ultimately remain consolidated into one state; Texas will probably be annexed to Louisiana, and Santander and Leon will detach themselves from Cohahuila. Then, again, Durango and New Mexico cannot eventually remain united, nor will the latter be always dependent for its supplies on the southern provinces. On the other hand, Queretaro and Tabasco seem scarcely entitled

to rank as separate states. The latter, if detached from Vera Cruz, might unite with Chiapa.* Other changes will be introduced both in the Mexican Federation and that of the Central States. As Chiapa, however, though usually comprehended in Guatimala, has adhered to Mexico, and now forms an integral part of that republic, it may be proper, before concluding our description of the latter country, to give some account of it in this place.

CHIAPA.

THIS state, formerly an intendancy of Guatimala, is bounded, on the north, by Tabasco; on the north-east, by Yucatan; on the east, by Totonicapan and Suchiltepec; on the west, by Oaxaca and Vera Cruz; and on the south, by the Pacific Ocean. It is about 250 miles in length from east to west, and 90 miles in its extreme breadth, lying between lat. 14° 40′, and 17° 30′ N., and long. 93° 16′, and 95° 46′ W. It contains 1 city, 1 town, 109 villages, and 128,000 inhabitants.† "What now forms the intendancy of Chiapa," says a native historian, to whom we shall have occasion to make frequent reference hereafter, "was, in the period of its paganism, divided into five

* We regret that we have not more accurate information on the subject of the present arrangement. The enumeration given by Mr. Poinsett as taken from the "Constitutive Act of the Mexican Nation," apparently omits the important province of Guadalaxara, while it includes, as a separate state, *Xalisco*, a place not any where mentioned by Humboldt; only, in his map, we find the port of *Xalisco Matanche* on the coast of that intendancy, near the *Cerro del Valle*, in lat. 21°. If this place be important enough to give its name to the State, it is marvellous that it should never before have been heard of. No geographical order is observed in the enumeration.

† Juarros's Hist. of Guatimala, p. 21.

provinces, peopled by as many different nations, who have, to the present day, preserved their distinct idioms; viz. Chiapa, Llanos, Tzendales, Zoques, and Soconusco. Of the last, the Spaniards formed the government of Soconusco, and of the other four, the *alcaldia mayor* of Ciudad Real. By a royal order in the year 1764, the latter was again subdivided to form the *alcaldia mayor* of Tuxtla, which was composed of the districts of Chiapa and Zoques, while those of Llanos and Tzendales remained to Ciudad Real. In 1790, the intendancy of Chiapa was created, and these three divisions were re-united under the jurisdiction of the intendant, who resides in Ciudad Real, and has a deputy at Tuxtla, Soconusco, and Comitan."* The district of Soconusco, however, has been, by the recent arrangements, again constituted a separate government; and the above description will not strictly apply to the State of Chiapa, which, instead of reaching to the shores of the Pacific, is bounded by Soconusco on the south, and must be considered as wholly an inland province. It has already been stated, that this province, lying contiguous alike to Mexico and the Central States, was claimed by both; and that, the option being given to the inhabitants, Chiapa declared its wish to join the Mexican union, while the district of Soconusco adhered to the Central Federation. Thus, the province has been divided between the two Republics. The history of Soconusco abounds with vicissitudes. That district was the first into which Pedro de Alvarado penetrated, and the first Indian villages that were reduced by him to the Spanish dominion, were on this part of the coast. In former times, it was one of the most populous and

* Juarros's Hist. of Guatimala, p. 14.

opulent districts in the kingdom of Guatimala. Its ancient capital, from which the province took its name, situated between the villages of San Domingo de Escuintla and Acacozagua, contained a numerous population, among whom were 200 Spaniards; but upwards of two centuries have elapsed since this extensive town fell to decay, and became at length entirely abandoned. For some time after the establishment of the *audiencia* of Guatimala, Soconusco remained under the jurisdiction of that of Mexico. By an edict of Jan. 20, 1553, it was annexed to the royal chancery of Guatimala. When that court was transferred to the city of Panama, Soconusco reverted to the *audiencia* of Mexico; but, in Jan. 1569, another edict restored it to Guatimala. It is supposed to have belonged originally to the diocese of Tlascala; on the creation of the see of Guatimala, it was annexed to that see; for a short time it was transferred to the bishopric of Vera Paz, but was soon restored to Guatimala; and finally, in 1596, it was transferred to the bishopric of Chiapa. Its separation from Chiapa will probably lead to another ecclesiastical change, unless, which is not unlikely, it should be superseded by the re-annexation of the district to the State of Chiapa, as a part of the Mexican Union.

Ciudad Real, or *Chiapa dos Espagnos*, the capital of the intendancy and an episcopal city, is situated in the plain of Gueizacatlan, about 200 miles from the Pacific Ocean, and 130 leagues N.W. of the city of Guatimala: lat. 16° 35′ N.; long. 94° 16′ W. The population is inconsiderable, consisting of less than 4,000 inhabitants, an eighth of whom are Indians. The city contains but one parish, that of the cathedral; but there are four convents, a nunnery, a church dedicated to Our Lady of Charity, two other chapels

without the walls, and five for the Indians, one in each of their *barrios* or wards. The Jesuits had also a college here. The town was founded by Diego de Mazariegos in 1528, with a view to keep in subjection the province which he had with difficulty recovered, after the revolt of the natives in 1526. It was at first called *Villa Real;* for a short time it bore the name of *San Christoval de los Llanos;* but, by an edict dated July 7, 1536, the Emperor Charles the Fifth ordered the name to be changed to *Ciudad Real*, and granted it all the honours and privileges of a city. It is a place of some trade. In its vicinity are several caverns, in which are found some very beautiful stalactites.

San Bartolomé de los Llanos, the chief place in the district so called, is a large village, containing two churches, with a population, including the surrounding plantations, of 7,400 souls. *San Jacinto Ocosingo*, the chief place in the district of Tzendales, contains above 3,000 inhabitants. *San Domingo Comitan*, the residence of the deputy-intendant, has a population of nearly 7,000, including the plantations. The Dominicans have a good convent here. *San Domingo Sinacantan* is a very ancient village, containing about 2,000 inhabitants. It formerly belonged to the Mexican empire. In its vicinity are found "small steel-coloured stones, of a cubical figure, and two or three lines in length, called St. Anne's stones," which are believed to have medicinal virtues: "it is asserted, that persons suffering under hysterical affections receive relief from drinking water in which they have been boiled." *San Juan Chamula* is a large village; the population exceeding 6,000 persons. *San Fernando de Guadalupe*, a village on the bank of the river Tulija, nine leagues from Tumbala, was founded

by the intendant of the province, in 1794, with the view to facilitate the navigation of the river, and, by its means, to open a communication with Campeche, the lake of Terminos, Carmen, and other contiguous points. It contains a few Spanish and Mulatto families, and about 200 Indians. The soil is fertile, and adapted to the cultivation of the cane, pepper, and cocoa. *Tuxtla*, the residence of the deputy-intendant of the district to which it gives its name, contains "a custom-house, a post-office, and a tobacco-manufactory." The population consists of a few Spanish families, and some mulattoes, but the greater part are Indians, amounting altogether to between 4 and 5,000 souls. This place is 18 leagues from Ciudad Real, and 140 leagues from Guatimala. *Tecpatlan*, the chief place in the district of Zoques, contains about 2,300 inhabitants. But the largest place in the whole province is *Chiapa dos Indios*, a very ancient village, founded in 1527. It is advantageously situated in a valley near the banks of the river Tabasco, in lat. 17° 5′ N., long. 93° 53′ W.; about 36 miles W. of Ciudad Real, and 358 miles S.E. of Mexico. The inhabitants are chiefly Indians, but they are reported to be rich, and a great deal of sugar is grown in the district. They are said to amount to about 4,000 families.* During the day, the heat is excessive, but the nights are cold. This place enjoys many privileges, and will probably rise in importance. We find it, indeed, denominated in Alcedo's Dictionary, a city.

The climate of this intendancy is for the most part hot and moist, but there are large tracts of rugged,

* Don D. Juarros states the population at 1,568 inhabitants. Unless this be an error of the press for 15,690, the discrepancy is unaccountably great.

mountainous country, covered with forests of cedar, cypress, pine, and walnut-trees. Extensive woods are found also in the lower region, which abound with the American lion (*mixtli*), the jaguar or ounce, the wild boar, parrots of great beauty, and great numbers of serpents. Goats, sheep, and pigs, of the European breed, have multiplied in this province to a remarkable degree; and the breed of horses is so much esteemed, that colts are sent to Mexico. The chief productions are cotton, cocoa, maize, cochineal, honey, and aromatic gums. Our information with regard to this province is very vague and imperfect, but it is evident that a very small proportion of it has been brought under cultivation. The population does not amount to quite five-sixths of that of Vera Cruz, which contains only 38 inhabitants to every square league, but is about twice as large. It appears, however, to have been, prior to the conquest, the seat of an advanced civilisation, and to have been well peopled. Near the village of *San Domingo Palenque*, on the borders of Yucatan, are considerable vestiges of an Indian capital, which were accidentally discovered about the middle of the last century, in the midst of a fertile and salubrious tract of country, almost entirely depopulated. These remains, although both their antiquity and their architectural beauty have been absurdly magnified, are highly interesting, and merit the attention of future travellers. "This metropolis," says Don Domingo Juarros, the historian of Guatimala, "like another Herculaneum, not indeed overwhelmed by the torrent of another Vesuvius, but concealed for ages in the midst of a vast desert, remained unknown until the middle of the eighteenth century, when some Spaniards having penetrated the dreary solitude, found themselves, to their great astonish-

ment, within sight of the remains of what had once been a superb city, six leagues in circumference. The solidity of its edifices, the stateliness of its palaces, and the magnificence of its public works, were not surpassed by the vastness of its extent: temples, altars, sculptures, and monumental stones, bear testimony to its vast antiquity." The hieroglyphics and emblems found here, are represented by the learned historian as bearing so strong a resemblance to those of the Egyptians, that he is strongly inclined to ascribe them to a colony of that nation!

The marvellous report brought back by the first discoverers having reached the ears of the Spanish Government, a royal mandate was issued in May 1786, directing a further examination of these ruins; and Captain Don Antonio del Rio was appointed by the Captain-general of Guatimala, to carry the mandate into execution. Being provided with a corps of Indian pioneers, he proceeded to the spot; but he had first to open a road to the "Palencian city," and a fortnight was occupied with felling and firing the timber with which the ruins were inaccessibly surrounded. Having succeeded by this means in obtaining not only a clear path, but a wholesome atmosphere for his further operations, he set to work on the *Casas de Piedras*, as the ruins are called; and ultimately, he says in his Report, "there remained neither a window nor a doorway blocked up, a partition that was not thrown down, nor a room, corridor, court, or tower, unexplored, nor a subterranean passage in which excavations were not effected from two to three yards in depth." The original manuscript document in which Don Antonio gives an account of his proceedings, was brought to light not many years ago, in an examination of the public archives of the

city of Guatimala. It has since been made public in the shape of an English translation, together with the learned commentary of Doctor Paul Felix Cabrera, of New Guatimala, who is still more confident than his fellow-citizen as to their Egyptian origin.* Don Antonio's description of the site is as follows.

"From Palenque, the last town northward in the province of Ciudad Real de Chiapa, taking a south-westerly direction, and ascending a ridge of high land that divides the kingdom of Guatimala from Yucatan or Campeche, at the distance of two leagues is the little river Micol, whose waters flowing in a westerly direction, unite with the great river Tulija, which bends its course towards the province of Tabasco. Having passed the Micol, the ascent begins; and at half a league from thence, the traveller crosses a little stream called Otolum, discharging its waters into the before-mentioned current. From this point, heaps of ruins are discovered, which render the road very difficult for another half league, when you gain the height on which the Stone Houses are situated, being fourteen in number, some more dilapidated than others, but still having many of their apartments perfectly discernible.

"A rectangular area, three hundred yards in breadth by four hundred and fifty in length, presents a plain at the base of the highest mountain forming the ridge; and in the centre is situated the largest of these structures which has as yet been discovered. It stands on a mound twenty yards high, and is surrounded by the other edifices, namely, five to the northward, four to the southward, one to the south-

* "*Description of the Ruins of an Ancient City, discovered near Palenque, in the Kingdom of Guatemala,*" &c. 4to. London, 1822.

west, and three to the eastward. In all directions, the fragments of other fallen buildings are to be seen extending along the mountain, that stretches east and west, about three or four leagues either way; so that the whole range of this ruined town may be computed to extend between seven and eight leagues. But its breadth is by no means equal to its length, being little more than half a league wide at the point where the ruins terminate, which is towards the river Micol, that winds round the base of the mountain, whence descend small streams that wash the foundation of the ruins on their banks; so that, were it not for the thick umbrageous foliage of the trees, they would present to the view so many beautiful serpentine rivulets."

The rivers abound with turtle and the smaller shell-fish, and running to the east, north, and west, afford the utmost facility to inland traffic. An abundance of wild fruit-trees, the sapote, the plantain, the aguacate, the camote, and the cassava, indicate what the soil would yield under proper cultivation. Under the largest building there runs a "subterranean aqueduct, built of stone, of great solidity." The description given of the *Casas de piedras* is vague and confused, and has the further disadvantage of appearing in a very indifferent translation; but, in the absence of a more accurate account, it may not be unacceptable to the reader.

"The interior of the large building is in a style of architecture strongly resembling the Gothic; and, from its rude and massive construction, promises great durability. The entrance is on the eastern side, by a portico or corridor thirty-six yards (*varas*) in length and three in breadth, supported by plain rectangular pillars, without either bases or pedestals, upon which there are square smooth stones of more than a foot in

thickness, forming an architrave; while on the exterior superficies are shields of a species of stucco; and over these stones, there is another plain rectangular block, five feet long and six broad, extending over two of the pillars. Medallions or compartments in stucco, containing different devices of the same material, appear as decorations to the chambers; and it is presumable from the vestiges of the heads which can still be traced, that they were the busts of a series of kings or lords to whom the natives were subject. Between the medallions there is a range of windows like niches, passing from one end of the wall to the other: some of them are square, some in the form of a Greek cross, being about two feet high and eight inches deep. Beyond the corridor there is a square court, entered by a flight of seven steps. The north side is entirely in ruins, but sufficient traces remain to shew that it once had a chamber and corridor similar to those on the eastern side, and which continued entirely along the several angles. The south side has four small chambers, with no other ornament than one or two little windows like those already described. The western side is correspondent to its opposite in all respects but in the variety of expression of the figures in stucco: these are much more rude and ridiculous than the others, and can be attributed only to the most uncultivated Indian capacity. The device is a sort of grotesque mask with a crown and long beard like that of a goat, under which are two Greek crosses, one within the other.

"Proceeding in the same direction, there is another court, similar in length to the last, but not so broad, having a passage round it that communicated with the opposite side: in this passage there are two chambers like those above mentioned, and an interior gal-

lery, looking on one side upon the court-yard, and commanding on the other a view of the open country. In this part of the edifice, some pillars yet remain, on which are relievos apparently representing the sacrifice of some wretched Indian, the destined victim of a sanguinary religion.

" Returning by the south side, the tower presents itself to notice: its height is sixteen yards; and to the four existing stories of the building * was *perhaps* added a fifth *with a cupola.* These stories diminish in size, and are without ornament. The tower has a well-imitated artificial entrance.....Behind the four chambers already mentioned, there are two others of larger dimensions, very well ornamented in the rude Indian style, and which appear to have been used as *oratories.* Beyond these oratories, and extending from north to south, are two apartments, each twenty-seven yards long by little more than three broad; they contain nothing worthy of notice, excepting a stone of an elliptical form, embedded in the wall, about a yard above the pavement, the height of which is one yard and a quarter, and the breadth one yard. Below this stone, is a plain, rectangular block, more than two yards long by one yard four inches broad, and seven inches thick, placed upon four feet in form of a table, with a figure in bas-relief, in the attitude of supporting it. Characters or symbols adorn the edges of the table. At the extremity of this apartment, and on a level with the pavement, there is an aperture like a hatchway, two yards long and more than one broad, leading to a subterranean passage by a flight of steps, which, at a regular distance, forms flats or landings, each having its

* There are only three floors in the subjoined etching.

respective doorway ornamented in front. Other openings lead to this subterranean avenue. On reaching the second door, artificial light became necessary to the descent into this gloomy abode, which was by a very gentle declivity. It has a turning at right angles; and at the end of the side-passage, there is another door, communicating with a chamber sixty-four yards long, and almost as large as those before described. Beyond this room there is still another, similar in every respect, and having light admitted into it by some windows commanding a corridor * fronting the south, and leading to the exterior of the edifice. Neither bas-reliefs nor any other embellishments were found in these places, nor did they present to notice any object, except some plain stones, two yards and a half long by one yard and a quarter broad, arranged horizontally upon four square stands of masonry, rising about half a yard above the ground. These I consider to have been receptacles for sleeping. Here all the doors terminated.

" On an eminence to the south is another edifice, of about forty yards in height, forming a parallelogram, and resembling the first in the style of its architecture. It has square pillars, an exterior gallery, and a saloon twenty yards long by three and a half broad, embellished with stucco medio-reliefs, representing female figures with children in their arms, all of the natural size: these figures are without heads. In the inner wall of the gallery, on each side of the door leading into the saloon, are three stones, three yards in height and upwards of one in breadth,

* How this consists with its subterraneous position, we cannot explain: there is probably some error.

covered with hieroglyphics in bas-relief. The whole of this gallery and saloon are paved.

"Leaving this structure, and passing by the ruins of many others, which were probably accessory to the principal edifice, the declivity conducts to an open space, whereby the approach to another house in a southerly direction is rendered practicable.....Eastward of this structure are three small eminences forming a triangle, upon each of which is a square building, eighteen yards long by eleven broad, of the same architecture as the former, but having, along thin roofings, several superstructures about three yards high, resembling turrets, covered with ornaments and devices in stucco. In the interior of the first of these three mansions, at the end of a gallery almost entirely dilapidated, is a saloon having a small chamber at each extremity. In the centre of the saloon is an oratory, rather more than three yards square, presenting on each side of the entrance a perpendicular stone, whereon is portrayed the image of a man in bas-relief. The outward decoration is confined to a sort of moulding, finished with small stucco bricks, on which are bas-reliefs. The pavement of the oratory is quite smooth, and eight inches thick. On perforating it in order to make an excavation, I found, about half a yard deep, a small round earthen vessel, about a foot in diameter, fitted horizontally with a mixture of lime to another of the same quality and dimensions. The digging being continued, a quarter of a yard beneath we discovered a circular stone of rather larger diameter than the first articles; and on removing this, a cylindrical cavity presented itself, about a foot wide and the third of a foot deep, containing a flint lance (lance-*head?*), two small conical

pyramids with the figure of a heart in dark crystallised stone, (known by the name of challa,) and two small earthen jars with covers, containing small stones and a ball of vermilion."

The two other edifices are of similar architecture, divided internally in the same manner; and here also, the Don states, were found, by excavating under what he calls the oratories, a flint lance or lance-head, two conical pyramids with the representation of a heart, and two earthen jars. On digging in other parts, they found small pieces of challa "in the shape of lancets or razor-blades," and a number of small bones and teeth, which, together with specimens of the masonry, and representations of the principal bas-reliefs, were forwarded by Don Antonio to the commandant-general, in order to be transmitted to Europe.

Among the seventeen plates which accompany the English translation, there is but one that exhibits any of the edifices. In this is represented a square building with two receding stories, which has apparently been carried higher. This we presume to be the tower referred to. There are square windows within arched niches, rudely cut; and between each story, a sort of frieze or ledge runs round the building. Branches of trees appear to have forced their way through the walls. The other plates contain representations of the bas-reliefs. These consist chiefly of figures in varied dresses and attitudes, and with different accompaniments, but all more or less decorously clothed, with caps or helmets adorned with flowers, pearls, and sundry nondescript ornaments. Necklaces and strings of pearls are a conspicuous decoration of most of the figures. But the most striking peculiarity in these representations is, the physiognomy of the

countenances, which is of one strongly marked character, though the individuals differ. A prodigious development of feature, especially of that which would be called the nose, but which in these personages comes nearer to a beak, is common to all of them; in almost all, the chin recedes not less remarkably than the proboscis protrudes; while some of the visages have the additional recommendation of being fearfully under-hung. This is especially the case with an old priest in a cap and apron, who holds an infant in his arms, doubtless with no very good purpose. In one of the plates, a figure whom we take to be a deity, is seated on a curious sort of throne, with one leg brought up into the lap, and the other depending, very much after the fashion of some of the Hindoo celestials, who prefer very odd and uncomfortable postures. This personage is very significantly pointing upwards with the fore-finger of the left hand, while the middle finger of the right is brought to rest emphatically upon the thumb, like a person talking with his fingers. The throne is ornamented with an enormous head and claw of an animal on each side of it; and perched on these heads are two undefined imp-like forms, with something resembling a flame proceeding from their forehead. In the next plate, a medallion of inferior execution represents a personage adorned with ear-rings, necklace, and bracelets, but no clothing except round the waist, seated *à la Turque* on a two-headed monster, and receiving a present from a full-dressed figure in a kneeling attitude. A smaller medallion, in the rudest style, represents a tree with a serpent twining round the trunk, and a bird perched on a branch hard by; and another presents a naked youth kneeling, and looking into the open jaws of a monstrous head, while another pair of tusks are

protruding at his back. It is observable, that none of the figures have a martial character, nor have they any weapon at all resembling a sword. But what the strange instruments are which they hold, or what they are engaged in, and what is the import of the strange hieroglyphics flourished round the largest drawing, we are unable to tell.* All the figures are beardless. The protruding under-lip is so much out of nature, that it suggests the idea of an artificial extension; and one might imagine that these personages set the fashion of wearing the *botoque*. One of the figures has, suspended from the neck, a very pretty ornament, which seems meant for an image of the sun. Other drawings are referred to in the Report, though they did not find their way with the MS.

* Doctor Paul Felix Cabrera, however, with an ingenuity and penetration truly marvellous, finds out the whole history of America in these rude representations, and tells us who the personages are, as readily as if they had all been his patients. The principal figure, it seems, is no other than Votan, great-grandson of Noah, who was the first man sent by God to America "to divide and portion out these Indian lands." He was not only a great prince, but an historical writer; and an account of his birth, parentage, and adventures, drawn up by himself, fell into the hands of the bishop of Chiapa, Don Francesco Nunez de la Vega, author of the "Diocesan Constitutions," printed at Rome in 1702, who was led to withhold it from the public only by his religious scruples, "on account of the mischievous use the Indians made of their histories in their superstition of *nagualism*," or demonology. It is much to be regretted, as the Doctor very sapiently observes, "that the place is unknown where these precious documents of history were deposited." But a still more lamentable loss to the world has been sustained in the destruction, by the hands of the same orthodox but over-zealous prelate, of certain large earthen vases containing figures in stone of the ancient Indian Pagans, which the unerring testimony of tradition ascribed to the same worthy American patriarch, and which consequently must have been the most ancient pottery now to be met with.

to the publisher, representing serpents, lizards, statues of men with palms in their hands, others beating drums and dancing, &c. &c.

According to the testimony of a monk of Merida, who gave the account to Captain Del Rio, about twenty leagues south of that city are found the remains of similar edifices, the largest of which is in good preservation. Eight leagues to the northward of Merida are ruined walls of other stone-houses, which increase in number in an easterly direction. At Mani on the *Rio de los Lagartos*, is "a very ancient palace," resembling that at Palenque, which was for some time inhabited by the Franciscans while their convent was building: in the centre of the principal area stands a conical pillar or pyramid of stones. On the road from Merida to Bacalar occur many other buildings. These are evidently the pyramidal edifices which struck the Spanish conquerors with so much surprise on their first landing in the peninsula of Yucatan, and which they compared to Moorish mosques. There can be no doubt of their sepulchral character, although they may have answered, like other ancient monuments, the double purpose of temples and tombs. The province of Chiapa would thus seem to have received its aboriginal population from the same source as the peninsula of Yucatan; and if the language spoken by the Indians should prove to be the Maya, (a point which we must look to some future traveller to ascertain,) there will be no room for hesitation in referring these monuments of ancient civilisation to a race distinct from the Aztec, and bearing more affinity to the Zapotec Indians of Oaxaca. The Cyclopean masonry of the Cholulan builders, differs scarcely less specifically from the

architecture of Mitla and Palenque, than the temples of Nubia from the pyramids of Gheeza.

CONCLUSION.

WE must now take leave of this interesting portion of the New Continent,—the most interesting perhaps, in respect of its physical features, its natural curiosities, and the monuments of its ancient civilisation. To Mexico and Peru alone, of all the countries in the western hemisphere, belongs a traditional history stretching back into an undefined antiquity, and connecting the present generation with an ancestry greater than themselves. Rude and insignificant as are the Mexican pyramids and sepulchres in comparison of the stupendous works of Theban and Persepolitan architects, and comparatively modern as is their supposed date, they have an interest peculiar to themselves, arising from their being the only monuments of man in these *extra-mundane* regions (as the whole continent might be termed in relation to the world of history), and from their obvious affinity to those which superstition and despotic power have erected in the Old World.* What they want as works of art, they acquire as moral phenomena. Among the nations who have disappeared in the Old World, it is the conjecture of Humboldt, that

* "A small number of nations, far distant from each other, the Etruscans, the Egyptians, the Thibetians, and the Aztecs, exhibit striking analogies in their buildings, their religious institutions, their division of time, and their mystic notions,—analogies which are as difficult to explain as the relations that exist between the Sanscrit, the Persian, the Greek, and the languages of German origin."—HUMBOLDT'S *Researches*, vol. i. p. 11.

the remains of some may yet be preserved in the scanty tribes who are dispersed through the vast solitudes of America. That hitherto it has been found impossible to ascertain the period when the communication between the two continents was first established, can waken no surprise, when it is considered how totally ignorant we are of the early history of those Asiatic nations to whom the Toltecs, the Aztecs, the Muyscas, and the Peruvians present the nearest analogies. "No historical fact, no tradition," says the learned Traveller, "connects the nations of South America with those that inhabit the countries north of the Isthmus of Panama." And yet, their physiological affinity is not more decisively marked than the analogies found in their institutions and history. "Men with beards, and of lighter complexions than the natives of Anahuac, Cundinamarca, and the elevated plain of Cuzco, make their appearance without any indication of the place of their birth; and, bearing the titles of high-priests, of legislators, of the friends of peace and the arts which flourish under its auspices, operate a sudden change in the policy of nations, who hail their arrival with veneration. Quetzalcoatl, Bochica, and Manco Capac, are the sacred names of these mysterious beings. Quetzalcoatl, clothed in a black, sacerdotal robe, comes from Panuco on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico. Bochica, the Buddh of the Muyscas, presents himself on the high plains of Bogota, where he arrives from the savannas which stretch along the eastern foot of the cordilleras. Some learned men have pretended to discover that these strangers were shipwrecked Europeans, or the descendants of those Scandinavians who, in the eleventh century, visited Greenland, Newfoundland,

and perhaps Nova Scotia;* but a slight reflection on the period of the Toltec migrations, on the monastic institutions, the symbols of worship, the calendar, and the form of the monuments of Cholula, of Sogamozo, and of Cuzco, leads us to conclude, that it was not in the north of Europe that Quetzalcoatl, Bochica, and Manco Capac framed their code of laws. Every consideration leads us rather towards Eastern Asia,—to those nations who have been in contact with the inhabitants of Thibet, to the Shamanist Tartars, and the bearded Ainos of the isles of Jesso and Sachalin."†

The annals of the Mexican empire appear to go back as far as the sixth century of the Christian era,—the epoch of the emigration of the Toltecs from the banks of the *Rio Gila*. Even this era is antecedent to the rise of Mohammedism, and the earliest authentic records of Arabian history. But when we consider the strong instinctive disposition of semi-civilised nations to perpetuate, by mechanical imitation, the same forms, and to adhere in all their works to a primitive type or model,—a disposition remarkably characteristic of the tribes of Eastern Asia,—these monuments of the ancient Mexicans would seem to carry us back to a period far more remote than their actual construc-

* The learned Author himself, however, remarks in another place: "They who have studied the history of the Scandinavian nations in the heroic times, must be struck at finding in Mexico a name (*Votan*, or Vodan) which recals that of Wodan, or *Odin*." According to the learned researches of Sir William Jones, Odin and Boudha, or Buddh, are probably one and the same person; and it is curious to observe, remarks M. Humboldt, "that the names of *Boud-var*, *Wodan's-dag* (Wednesday), and *Votan*, denote in India, in Scandinavia, and in Mexico (Chiapa), a day of a small period." These coincidences, however, are fallacious *data* for reasoning.—See *Researches*, vol. i. pp. 173, 319.

† Researches, vol. i. pp. 29, 30.

tion. In them we doubtless have the fac-similes of the works of their Asiatic ancestry; and viewed in this light, they serve as legendary records, embodied traditions of a primeval race. Their specific date becomes but a starting-post from which imagination takes her flight into the fabulous regions of history.

Various interesting topics of inquiry suggest themselves relative to the remarkable concentration of population, as well as of civilisation, in the central regions of America; — the successive emigrations which must have taken place at remote intervals; — the distinctive features of the hunter, pastoral, and agricultural tribes of America; — and the probable course of the great stream of population southward, till we reach the shores of the mighty Amazons, which seems the limit of aboriginal civilisation. These subjects, however, lie far out of our province, and we refer to them merely with a view to furnish hints to future travellers.

The mineral treasures of Mexico form, at the present moment, its strongest attraction; and owing to the influx of foreign capital which they are occasioning, the Mexican mines may prove indirectly, what mines have rarely proved, the sources of national prosperity. We have endeavoured to convey the amplest information on this point that we at present possess, and shall have occasion to recur to the subject before we close the volume. To the eye of the philanthropist, however, or of the enlightened politician, neither the mines, nor the monuments, nor any of the physical phenomena of Mexico, constitute the chief interest of this rising country. The sudden apparition of the volcano of Jorullo itself, is not a more striking event in the natural history of the globe, than is the formation of a connected chain

of federal republics in the two Americas, in its moral history. Unhappily signalised as their birth has been by devastation and terror, now that the convulsion has subsided, they will be found, we trust, to have supplied, as it were, the soil in which social institutions, the public virtues, and domestic charities shall strike deep and flourish. An immense responsibility has devolved on the present federal government, to whom it has been confided to conduct the grand social experiment to its issue. May the result justify the universal admiration which is entertained for the character of the truly patriotic president,—the Mexican Washington, and that of his brave and generous compeer! And may the words not be forgotten with which the Traveller to whom both Mexico and Europe are so greatly indebted, concludes his Political Essay,—"That the prosperity of the whites is intimately connected with that of the copper-coloured race; and that there can be no durable prosperity for the two Americas, till this unfortunate race, humiliated, but not degraded by long oppression, shall participate in all the advantages resulting from the progress of civilisation and the improvement of social order."

END OF MEXICO.

GUATIMALA.

GUATIMALA.

GUATIMALA.*

[A Federal Republic, extending from about long. 81° 45′ W. to 93° W., and from lat. 8° to 17° N.; bounded, on the N.W. by Mexico; on the N. and E. by the Atlantic; on the S.E. by Colombia; and on the S. and S.W. by the Pacific Ocean.]

THE kingdom of Guatimala "received its name from the word *Quauhtemali*, which, in the Mexican language, means a decayed log of wood, because the Mexican Indians who accompanied Alvarado, found, near the palace of the kings of Kachiquel, an old worm-eaten tree, and gave this name to the capital." Such is the statement adopted by Don Domingo Juarros, in his History of the Kingdom of Guatimala, as the true origin of the name. Some writers, however, he tells us, have derived it from *Uhatezmalha*, which signifies, in the Tzendale dialect, a mountain that throws out water, "alluding, doubtless, to the mountain on the skirts of which the city of Guatimala was built." With due submission to the historian, we incline to the latter etymology; first, because it appears extremely unlikely that the name of the kingdom should not be more ancient than the Spanish conquest; and secondly, because Alvarado would not have left it to Mexican Indians to name the city. The Aztec word *Quauhtli* signifies eagle, in which sense it occurs in composition in the words *Quauhtinchan*, house of the eagle, (a Mexican city,) and

* More properly GUATEMALA; but we have adhered to the usual orthography.

Quauhtemotzin, the name of the last sultan of Tenochtitlan. We cannot affirm that *Quauhtemali* may not signify a log of wood, but, if it be really derived from an Aztec word, we should deem an etymology referring to the eagle far more plausible. The mountain affords, in all probability, the true derivation. Another etymology, however, is given by one historian, Francisco de Fuentes y Gusman, who derives the name from *Coctecmalan*, signifying "milk-wood,"—a peculiar tree found only in the neighbourhood of the supposed site of the original capital, where now stands the village of Tzacualpa. Lastly, Juarros suggests, that the word may possibly be merely a corruption of the name of Juitemal, the first king of Guatimala, as Quiché was named from Nimaquiche, and Nicaragua from the cacique of the same name. It is not quite clear, however, that the name of the territory has not, in some of these instances, led to the invention of a name for its sovereign; and the existence of King Juitemal is not sufficiently established to afford a solid basis for this ingenious conjecture.

At the time of the conquest (A.D. 1524) this region is stated to have been well peopled by more than thirty distinct tribes, each governed by its own chief, and having its peculiar dialect. These tribes were continually at war with each other, and the ancient distinctions are still perpetuated in the variety of languages and dissimilar customs which are found in the different provinces. The Mexican or Aztec language is spoken by the Pipil Indians, who are settled along the coasts of the Pacific, and by some other tribes; besides this, no fewer than twenty-four dialects, peculiar to Guatimala, are still said to be spoken, the names of which are, the Quiché, the

Kachiquel, the Zutugil, the Mam, the Pocomam, the Pupuluca, the Sinca, the Chorti, the Alaguilac, the Caichi, the Pochonchi, the Ixil, the Zotzil, the Tzendal, the Chapaneca, the Zoque, the Coxoh, the Chañabal, the Chol, the Uzpanteca, the Lenca, the Aguacateca, the Quecchi, and the Nahuate or Pipil. The Maya language is also spoken in Chiapa. "It is true," says Don Domingo Juarros, "there is a strong resemblance between some of the idioms; and the Indians of one tribe can understand those of another from analogy: these instances, however, are not very frequent, nor can the intercourse be maintained with sufficient clearness and precision to enable them to traffic with each other readily and satisfactorily." The learned Don labours with patriotic solicitude to shew, that his country was never subject to the Mexican sovereigns. The proofs he adduces are, first, that the Mexicans always compelled the inhabitants of the countries they conquered to adopt their language, but the Aztec is not the prevailing language in Guatimala; secondly, that at the time of the conquest, the Spaniards found no open road from Mexico to Chiapa, but only narrow paths, in many places overgrown by vegetation. The latter is a very weak and insufficient argument. That there was an intercourse between the two countries is indubitable, and there must therefore have been what the natives would call a road. According to the tradition recited by the learned Historian himself, the Tulteca or Toltec Indians, the most powerful and civilised of all the nations of Guatimala, came originally from the neighbourhood of Tula, in the kingdom of Mexico. This emigration took place by direction of an oracle, in consequence of the great increase of the population, in the reign of Nimaquiché,

the fifth king of the Tultecas. "In performing this journey, they expended many years, suffered extraordinary hardships, and wandered over an immense tract of country, until they discovered a large lake (the lake of Atitan), and resolved to fix their habitations in a convenient place at a short distance from it, which they called Quiché, in commemoration of their king Nimaquiché (Quiché the Great), who died during their peregrination." The time of this emigration, it is, of course, impossible to ascertain with precision. Nimaquiché was succeeded by his son Acxopil, from whom Kicab Tanub, the contemporary of Montezuma II., was the fourteenth in succession who reigned in Utatlan, the capital of Quiché. Allowing twenty years to a reign, this would carry back the foundation of the Toltec empire of Quiché to nearly the middle of the thirteenth century, about thirty or forty years after the arrival of the Aztecs in the valley of Mexico.* So far the accounts would seem to agree. Autzol, or Ahuitzotl, the eighth sultan of Tenochtitlan, is stated to have sent a special embassy to the kings of Quiché, Kachiquel, and Zutugil, with the professed object of establishing an alliance between the two kingdoms; but those chiefs, suspecting the sincerity of his proposals, dismissed the Aztec ambassadors, whom they regarded as no better than spies, with evasive answers and less than usual courtesy. The King of Quiché alleged that he could not understand their language: if so, two hundred and fifty years must have produced a great change either in the dialect of Tenochtitlan or in that of Utatlan, as they must originally have been the same. The kings of both countries were of the

* See vol. i. p. 39.

same race. "It appears, too," says Juarros, "that these princes acknowledged the relationship, and maintained a communication with each other; for it is related in a manuscript of sixteen quarto pages, which is preserved by the Indians of the village of St. Andres Xecul, that when Montezuma II. was made prisoner (by Cortes), he sent a private ambassador to Kicab Tanub, King of Quiché, to inform him that some white men had arrived in his states, and made war upon him with such impetuosity, that the whole strength of his people was unable to resist them; that he was himself a prisoner surrounded with guards; and, hearing it was the intention of the invaders to pass on to the kingdom of Quiché and subdue it, he resolved to send notice of the design, in order that Kicab Tanub might be prepared to oppose them. This," adds our historian, "is a strong proof of a good understanding having existed between the two kings; for if Montezuma, watched as he was by his keepers, could contrive to despatch this messenger secretly to Kicab, there is no doubt that frequent intercourse took place between them in the time of peace and tranquillity." But if so, there must have been a road from one kingdom to the other; and the argument that Guatimala could not have been tributary to Mexico, because there was no means of keeping up a communication prior to the Spanish conquest, falls to the ground. Montezuma was the immediate successor of Ahuitzotl, whose ambassadors were sent home with so little ceremony, but who is stated, nevertheless, to have found the means of introducing into the country certain Mexicans in the character of traders, for the purpose of forming a party that might be useful in furthering his attempts at subjugating the kingdom. The good

understanding between Ahuitzotl's successor and the King of Quiché remains unaccounted for. Either some amicable overtures must have subsequently been made by the Mexican sovereign with better success, or there must have taken place, transactions of a military nature, not, perhaps, to the honour of the Guatimalan monarchs. Nor is the argument less inconclusive, which Don Domingo founds on the diversity of dialects. The number of languages spoken in Mexico exceeds twenty, and many of them differ from each other far more remarkably than, as we suspect, the Quiché, Kachiquel, Zutugil, and Pipil, will be found to do from the Aztec. Nevertheless, as there is no positive proof that the kingdom of Guatimala was ever subject to the Mexicans, we are quite willing to take for granted that its independence remained inviolate up to the period of the Spanish conquest.

When the Toltecs arrived in Guatimala, they found the country already inhabited by various tribes, as, in Mexico, they were preceded by the Chichimecs and Ottomites. The remains of these aboriginal tribes, who appear to have been driven southward, are probably still in existence. The Toltec empire founded by Acxopil, afterwards subdivided into the lordships of Quiché, Kachiquel, and Zutugil, is said to have comprised the provinces of Solola, Chimaltenango, Sacatepec, and part of Quezaltenango and Totonicapan. At the time of the Spanish conquest, a civil war was raging between the King of the Kachiquels and the Zutugil monarch, which induced the former to call in the aid of those dangerous allies. "The fame of Cortes's exploits," we are told, "spread rapidly through the country, and soon reached the court of the Kachiquel kings, who, of

their own free will, sent an embassy to him, offering to acknowledge themselves vassals of the King of Spain. The chief received the ambassadors with all the kindness and affability so peculiar to him, treated them with every mark of distinction, and gave assurances that himself and all those under his command would govern them with mildness in peace, and defend them against all enemies. Cortes sent Pedro de Alvarado, one of his officers who had been most active in the conquest of New Spain, to take possession of Guatimala, and receive the subjection of the native kings. He quitted the city of Mexico on the 13th of November, 1523, accompanied by 300 Spaniards and a large body of auxiliaries, Mexicans, Tlascaltecs, and Cholulans. After a short detention in subduing the natives of Tehuantepec, who had revolted, he advanced, completed the conquest of Soconusco and Tonala, and arrived in the territory of the Quichés on the 24th of February, 1524."

Kicab Tanub was engaged in a sanguinary war with the Zutugiles and the Mams, when the tidings reached him, that the Spaniards had arrived at the boundaries of Soconusco. On receiving this intelligence, he suspended further hostilities, and despatched messengers to the different kings and chiefs, inviting them to confederate for their common defence. The same spirit of rivalry and bitter animosity, however, which led to the overthrow of the Mexican empire by a handful of Europeans, prevailed, on this occasion, over every patriotic feeling. The Kachiquel monarch openly declared himself a friend to the *Teules*, or gods, as the Spaniards were called; and the king of the Zutugiles rejected the proposal with haughty contempt. At this crisis, Kicab fell sick and died. He was succeeded by his eldest

son, Tecum Umam, who had but little leisure to indulge in sorrow for his father's death, as every hour brought him advice of the enemy's approach. At length, information arrived, that the Spaniards had laid siege to Xelahuh (or Quezaltenango), the most important place in the kingdom, and which was garrisoned at this time by 80,000 Indians. Alarmed at their rapid progress, Tecum Umam quitted his capital at the head of an army of 70,000 men, and by the time he reached Quezaltenango, he was joined by several petty chiefs, so that he was able to marshal on the plain of Tzaccaha 232,000 warriors. Here he fortified his camp with a wall of loose stones, strengthened by a deep fosse, which was lined with rows of poisoned stakes. The Spaniards, having traversed the province of Soconusco, entered the mountains, and captured the stronghold of Xetulul, or Sapotitlan; they then pursued their march till, on arriving at the banks of the river Zamala, they found themselves vigorously attacked by a large body of Indians. The Spanish musketry soon threw the Quichés into confusion: three times they rallied, and renewed the attack with great fury, but at length, their leaders being slain, they fled with precipitation. The invaders now thought themselves secure from the assaults of the barbarians, but, on their beginning to ascend the steep ridge now called the *Cerro de Santa Maria de Jesus*, they found the summit covered with the enemy, who prepared to dispute the passage of the defile. Between the rivers Zamala and Olintepec, six actions took place, in all of which the Indians were defeated with great slaughter. That which was fought in the defile of the latter river, was the most desperate: its waters were reddened with

the carnage, and received from that circumstance the name of *Xiquigel*, or river of blood. This was one of the severest conflicts in which the Spaniards had yet been engaged. After this victory, they remained for three days without further molestation from the natives, which afforded them time to recover from their great fatigues. On the fourth day, they advanced to Xelahuh, which they found abandoned; and some stragglers who were brought in, reported that all the inhabitants had fled to the mountains. It was soon discovered, however, that all the force of the surrounding country had been collected to make another attack on the Spaniards. The army immediately quitted Xelahuh, and took up a favourable position on the plain. The cavalry, consisting of 135 men, was divided into two troops: Alvarado himself commanded the infantry. The Indian army was formed into two very strong divisions, one of which was headed by the monarch in person. "As soon as the contending parties came within reach of each other, a furious combat ensued. One of the Indian divisions, being attacked by the cavalry, was forced to abandon its position, and retire for support on the other, which was resolutely engaged with the infantry. On the defeat of this first division, the cavalry rejoined the main body, where the general had, by several small detachments, been able to resist the force of Tecum Umam. The king personally attacked Alvarado, and wounded his horse so severely, that he was forced to dismount and procure another. Tecum Umam renewed his assault upon the general a second and even a third time, and, in the last encounter, received a wound from a lance by the hand of Alvarado, of which he died almost immediately.

The fury of the Indians was increased to madness on seeing their monarch fall: the discharge of pikes, arrows, and stones that followed, was more violent than any thing that had hitherto been witnessed. A critical moment was seized for attacking in close column, and that manœuvre decided the fate of the day. The Indians, unable to make head against this solid body, yielded to despair, and broke away in the most precipitate flight, leaving the Spaniards completely masters of the field.

"Hopeless of being able longer to resist the conquerors by the force of their arms, they had recourse to stratagem and treachery, which was determined upon in a council of war held in Utatlan, by the King Chignauivcelut, son and successor of Tecum Umam. To put their design into practice, the king began by sending a solemn embassy to Alvarado with a valuable present of gold, to sue for peace and forgiveness for the past, and to offer submission to the Spanish monarch. The ambassadors entreated the general to visit the capital, where he might conveniently refresh himself after his late severe fatigues, and where the king was anxious to receive and entertain him with whatever his dominions could afford. Alvarado most anxiously desired to establish peace, and this invitation being considered as a favourable opportunity, he received the ambassadors with every mark of distinction and kindness; he promised to repair to Utatlan, and dismissed them with presents of some trifles of Spanish workmanship, that were held in the highest estimation by the Indians. On the following day, the army decamped for Utatlan, in the highest spirits, believing the demonstrations of the Quichés to be sincere, and supposing that the war was terminated. But, on entering the city, and observing the strength

of the place, that it was well walled and surrounded by a deep ravine, having but two approaches to it; the one by an ascent of twenty-five steps, and the other by a causeway, both of which were extremely narrow; that the streets were but of trifling breadth, and the houses very lofty; perceiving also that there were neither women nor children in the place, and that the Indians appeared greatly agitated, the soldiers began to suspect some deceit. Their apprehensions were soon confirmed by the Indians of Quetzaltenango, who accompanied the army. These had discovered, that the people of Utatlan intended that night to set the town on fire in order to destroy the Spaniards; and that large bodies of them were concealed in the neighbouring defiles, who were, as soon as they saw the flames, to fall upon the Spaniards, as they endeavoured to escape from the fire. On gaining this intelligence, the troops observed the movements of the Utatlans very cautiously. They examined the houses, and ascertained that there was no preparation of victuals to regale them, as they had been promised; but that there was in every place a great quantity of light, dry fuel, and other combustibles. Alvarado no longer doubted the correctness of the information. He assembled a council, represented to the officers the perilous situation in which they were involved, and the immediate necessity of quitting the place. The troops were then collected, and, without any appearance of alarm, marched out in good order to the open plain; pretending to Chignauivcelut and his caciques, that they quitted the city for the better accommodation of the horses, which were accustomed to feed at liberty in the fields. The king, with pretended courtesy, accompanying the army to the plain, the general availed himself of this opportunity to make him a prisoner;

and after a trial, in which proofs of his treachery were adduced, he was sentenced to be hanged, and the punishment immediately inflicted. Neither the death of Tecum Umam and their principal leaders slain in battle, nor the ignominious execution of Chignauivcelut, was sufficient to intimidate the fierce spirit of the Quichés; on the contrary, it excited fresh ebullitions of rage and animosity. They gave the signal to the troops that lay in ambush, and a general attack upon the Spaniards ensued. The army was assaulted simultaneously on all sides by powerful squadrons of the Indians. But Spanish bravery increased with increasing dangers. The artillery was brought into action, and made dreadful havoc in the enemy's ranks, who however maintained the contest with desperate valour for a short time; but they were soon thrown into confusion. The leaders were unable to rally their troops against the destructive fire of the guns, and they abandoned a field already covered with heaps of slain. Some fled to their places of refuge, and others threw away their arms in token of submission, and surrendered themselves and their caciques to the generosity of their conquerors, who, by this victory, remained undisputed masters of the kingdom."

This victory was gained on the 14th of May, 1524. A small chapel was hastily erected on the spot, and on the following day, which was the Pentecost, mass was celebrated; and "thus commenced the Catholic worship in this region." Alvarado, we are told, unwilling to deprive the royal race of Tanub of their inheritance, raised to the throne Sequechul, the next in succession to Chignauivcelut. He remained at Utatlan for eight days, during which he sent out detachments to explore and reduce the surrounding country; and in this interval, ambassadors arrived

from Sinacam, King of the Kachiquels, tendering his allegiance, with offers of troops and other necessaries. Leaving Juan de Leon Cardona in command at Utatlan, Alvarado set out for Guatimala, escorted by 2,000 Kachiquels, who were employed to clear the road. The Spaniards were not without their misgivings respecting the intentions of these new allies, but they proved to be unfounded. Sinacam advanced to meet them in his litter, richly adorned with plumes of quetzal's feathers and ornaments of gold; and the two chiefs proceeded at the head of their respective suites, by the route of Iztapa, to the capital, situated, according to Fuentes, at the place now called San Miguel Tzacualpa, which signifies "old town." Here the Spaniards were most hospitably entertained by the Guatimalan monarch. After remaining here for some time, Alvarado again set out towards the village of Atitlan, to attack the Zutugiles. Taking their route by the villages on the coast, they overcame whatever force attempted to dispute their passage, until they arrived, on the 24th of July, at a place called Atmulunca, or Almolonga, "the water that springs up." "This situation," says Remesal, "pleased the Spaniards so much by its fine climate, the beauty of the meadows, delightfully watered by running streams, and particularly from lying between two lofty mountains, from one of which descended rills of water in every direction, while from the summit of the other issued volumes of smoke and fire; that they determined to establish themselves here, and, aided by the Mexicans and Tlascaltecs, they erected the requisite quarters. On the 25th of July, the festival of St. James, the patron of Spain, the troops were mustered under arms, and marched to attend divine service with martial music, and repeated

discharges of fire-arms. In this array, they proceeded to the humble church which had been constructed, where Juan Godines, chaplain to the army, said mass. This service finished, the whole body invoked the protection of the apostle, gave his name to the town they had founded, and dedicated to him the church that was to be built. The foundation of the new town was solemnized by the army with feasts and military rejoicings, that continued for three days." On the 29th of July, the alcaldes and regidors of the new city took their seats in council. On the 12th of August, another council was held, at which the public officers, with other persons to the number of ninety-seven, were registered as citizens. "With these formalities," says Juarros, "the foundation of the city of *San Jago de los Caballeros de Guatimala* was completed."*

Alvarado, either in person or by his lieutenants, governed the newly acquired territories in Guatimala from the year 1524, until 1541, the year of his death; for the first four years by commission from Cortes, and afterwards as governor and captain-general of the kingdom of Guatimala by commission from the Emperor Charles the Fifth, dated Dec. 18, 1527. On the death of Alvarado, a royal *audiencia* was established, by a decree dated Nov. 20, 1542, for the provinces of Guatimala and Nicaragua, of which Alonzo de Maldonado was appointed president. It was ordered to hold its sittings in the town of Valladolid de Comayagua; but this being deemed inconvenient, the royal permission was obtained for its removal to the city of Gracias a Dios, where the first session was

* Juarros, pp. 125, 6: 394—403.

held in May 1544. In 1555, the tribunal was transferred to the city of Guatimala. It was then for a short time removed to Panama, but, in 1569, the previous order was rescinded, and the *audiencia* was once more established at Guatimala. Philip II. enlarged its powers, and constituted it a pretorial court independent of the viceroy of Mexico. The jurisdiction of the royal chancery of Guatimala extended along the shores of the Atlantic, from the coast of Balize in the Bay of Honduras, to the *Escudo de Veraguas*, a small desert island off the coast of Veraguas, in lat. 9° 21′ N., and long. 82° 46′ W.; and, on the Pacific coast, from the bar of the river Parredon in the province of Soconusco, to the mouth of the river Boruca in that of Costa Rica. The river Chilillo was its boundary towards Oaxaca, and it extended to the district of Chiriqui towards the south-east, where the jurisdiction of Santa Fé de Bogota terminated. The territory comprised within these limits, is about 900 miles in length; * its breadth from sea to sea varies from 180 to upwards of 500 miles. The extent of surface is computed to be 200,500 square miles. The population, in 1778, according to a census taken by royal orders, amounted to 832,055 souls. In 1791, a considerable increase had taken place in some districts, and in 1800, it is supposed by Humboldt to have risen to 1,200,000 souls; which, taking the extent of surface at 26,000 square leagues, gives 46 inhabitants to the square league.† A still more recent

* The "*travelling* distance" from the river Chilillo to Chiriqui, is estimated by Juarros at more than 700 Spanish leagues, or upwards of 3,000 English miles.

† Humboldt, Pol. Essay, vol. iv. p. 322.

account brings up the population to 1,300,000;* but in this, as well as in the preceding calculations, Chiapa is included, the population of which is stated at 128,000.

The provincial divisions of Guatimala have varied with the changing circumstances of the country: the number of provinces has at one time been increased, at another time reduced, as new *alcaldias mayor* have been created, or several *corregimientos* have been united. At one period, there were as many as thirty-two provinces, of which four were distinguished as governments, viz. Comayagua, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Soconusco; nine were *alcaldias mayor*, viz. San Salvador, Ciudad Real, Tegucigalpa, Zonzonate, Verapaz, Suchiltepec, Nicoya, Amatique, and the *real* of San Andres de Zaragoza; and eighteen were *corregimientos*, the corregidors of which were nominated by the *audiencia*. Such was the distribution of the kingdom in the seventeenth century; but, about the year 1660, the population of the province of Costa Rica being greatly diminished, four of the *corregimientos* were extinguished, and the divisions were annexed to that government: at the same time, four other *corregimientos* were shared between the governments of Comayagua and Nicaragua. In the beginning of the eighteenth century, the *alcaldias mayor* of Amatique and San Andres were suppressed, and several new ones were created. By these and other changes, the thirty-two provinces were reduced to fifteen, one of which is styled a government, four are intendancies, eight are *alcaldias mayor*, and two are corregidorships. Five of the provinces are situated

* Poinsett's Notes, p. 239.

on the shores of the Pacific; five on the Atlantic coast; and five are inland. They are as follow:

MARITIME PROVINCES ON THE COAST OF THE PACIFIC.

1. Intendancy of Ciudad Real, or Chiapa.
   including (1) District of Ciudad Real.
   (2) ——— Tuxtla.
   (3) ——— Soconusco.
2. Alcaldia-mayor of Suchiltepec.
3. ——— Escuintla.
4. ——— Zonzonate.
5. Intendancy of San Salvador.
   including (1) District of Santa Ana.
   (2) ——— San Salvador.
   (3) ——— San Vicente.
   (4) ——— San Miguel.

MARITIME PROVINCES ON THE ATLANTIC COAST.

6. Alcaldia-mayor of Vera Paz.
7. Corregimiento of Chiquimula.
8. Intendancy of Comayagua, or Honduras.
   including (1) District of Comayagua.
   (2) ——— Tegucigalpa.
9. Intendancy of Nicaragua, or Leon.
   including (1) District of Leon.
   (2) ——— Matagalpa.
   (3) ——— Realejo.
   (4) ——— Subtiava.
   (5) ——— Nicoya.
10. Government of Costa Rica.

INTERIOR PROVINCES.

11. Alcaldia-mayor of Totonicapan and Gueguetenango.
12. Corregimiento of Quezaltenango.
13. Alcaldia-mayor of Sololá and Atitan.
14. ——— Chimaltenango.
15. ——— Sacatepec.

Between the intendancies of Nicaragua and Comayagua, lie two provinces peopled by uncivilised Indians of various nations, who are called indiscriminately

Xicacs, Moscos, and Sambos. These provinces, which extend along the Atlantic coast from the river Aguan to the San Juan, are called by Juarros, the Provinces of Taguzgalpa and Tologalpa. They form part of the tract better known under the name of the *Mosquito Shore.* The Mosquito Indians, as they are generally called, have always borne an inveterate dislike to the Spaniards. The Duke of Albemarle, when governor of Jamaica, fostered this dislike, and he invested one of the Indians with the office of chief of the Mosquitoes, under the protection of England. But, by a convention between Great Britain and Spain, signed in London on the 14th of July, 1786, it was agreed on the part of his Britannic Majesty, that his subjects and other colonists who had hitherto enjoyed the protection of England, should evacuate the country of the *Mosquitos*, as well as the continent in general, and the islands adjacent, without exception; his Catholic Majesty pledging himself not to exercise any act of severity against the *Mosquitos*, on account of the connexions which may have subsisted between the said Indians and the English. The town and territory of Poyais, where, a few years ago, some adventurers from this country attempted to establish an independent colony, are situated on the river Tinto, or Black river, which discharges itself into the Atlantic near Cape Camaron: they are included in Taguzgalpa, which, though nominally a part of Guatimala, has never actually been appropriated. So far his highness Gregor Macgregor, the self-styled cazique of Poyais, had some plea in justification of his trespassing on these shores. Poyais town is a paltry village of huts and log-houses, on the west side of Black river, about sixty miles inland. The river Aguan, which divides Taguzgalpa from Honduras,

discharges itself about sixty miles to the westward of Cape Camaran: eastward, the province extends to Cape Gracias a Dios. Beyond that point, the tract of coast extending southward to the river Chagres, and including the province of Tologalpa, now belongs to the republic of Colombia; and a decree of that government, dated Santa Fé de Bogota, July 5, 1824, declares all persons attempting to colonise that part of the coast liable to penal severities.*

* The decree is as follows: "Francisco de Paula Santander, General of Division of the Armies of Colombia, Vice-President of the Republic, &c.—Inasmuch as it has come to the knowledge of the Government of the Republic of Colombia, that various individuals, resident in foreign countries, have projected the foundation of establishments in a certain territory called Poyais, situate on the coasts of Mosquito; and considering that similar enterprises of unauthorised adventurers may be prejudicial to the interests of the Republic and to themselves, in virtue of the provisions of the 5th Article of the Fundamental, it is decreed as follows:

"Art. 1. Is declared illegal every undertaking which has for its object the colonisation of any point of that part of the coast of Mosquito, from the Cape Gracias a Dios inclusive to the River Chagres, which belongs, in dominion and property, to the Republic of Colombia, in virtue of the formal declaration, made in San Lorenzo on the 30th of November, 1803, by which the said part of the coast of Mosquito is definitively adjoined to the ancient vice-royalty of Nueva-Granada, and separated from the jurisdiction of the captain-generalship of Guatimala, to which it previously belonged.

"Art. 2. It is declared also to all person or persons who, in contravention of the former article, intend to found colonies or foreign establishments on the above-mentioned coast of Mosquito, up to Cape Gracias a Dios inclusive, that they incur the penalties to which those persons are subjected who violently usurp national property, and disturb internal peace and tranquillity, unless they have previously obtained the approbation and consent of the government, conformably to the laws.

"Art. 3. It is also declared, that the necessary approbation and consent to colonise the coast of Mosquito, which is under the immediate jurisdiction of the Republic, or part of it, not having

The ecclesiastical government of the kingdom of Guatimala consists of an archbishop and three suffragans. The immediate diocese of the archbishop of Guatimala, extending 214 leagues from west to east, comprises 108 curacies, besides others under the charge of the monastic orders, and 424 parochial churches: it was created an episcopal see by Pope Paul III. in 1534. The bishop of Leon has jurisdiction over the intendancy of Nicaragua and the government of Costa Rica: in his diocese are 39 curacies and 88 parochial churches. The bishop of Ciudad Real has under his jurisdiction the whole of Chiapa, containing 38 curacies and 102 parish churches. The fourth bishopric is that of Comayagua, comprising the intendancy of Honduras: it contains 35 curacies and 145 parish churches. The small district of Peten in Vera Paz, belongs to the diocese of the bishop of Yucatan. Both the ecclesiastical and the civil distribution of the country, however, will probably undergo considerable modifications under the new order of things. The greater part of the bishopric and intendancy of Chiapa has become united to Mexico; part of Vera Paz is ecclesiastically annexed to Yucatan; and Colombia has obtained, by the cession of Tologalpa, a large portion of Nicaragua and of the bishopric of Leon, including 180 leagues of coast, the importance of which, in connexion with the projected communication between the two oceans by means of the river San Juan and the lake of Nicaragua, will be incalculable. Eventually, Guatimala will probably be divided between

been granted to any person within or out of the territory of the Republic, whatever person or persons, citizens or foreigners, attempt to affect it, will, *ipso facto*, be subject to the consequences to which such illegal and unauthorised conduct exposes them."

Mexico and Colombia. The remainder of Nicaragua and Costa Rica will naturally fall to the share of the latter power, while the provinces to the northward and west of Cape Camaron, will more conveniently unite themselves to the Mexican States. We shall now proceed to give some further topographical details respecting this almost unknown portion of the New World.

PROVINCES ON THE COAST OF THE PACIFIC.

THE intendancy of Ciudad Real has been described in the account of the Mexican States, with the exception of the maritime district of Soconusco, which extends fifty-eight leagues along the shores of the Pacific, from the plains of Tonalá, in the district of Tehuantepec, to the river Tilapa, which divides it from Suchiltepec: its breadth, from the sea to the mountains, is about sixteen leagues. The climate is hot, the country level and fertile, yet, from want of hands, very little of the land is under cultivation. It is watered by fifteen rivers, and abounds in woods of the most valuable trees. The principal productions are indigo, vanilla, *leche de maria* (a valuable gum), *pita* (a species of flax), cotton, cocoa (the most esteemed of any in the kingdom), *achiote*, and a great variety of medicinal plants and drugs. But, in proportion as the valuable products of the earth in this beautiful country are numerous, the abundance of wild beasts and reptiles is so great, as to render it almost uninhabitable. Among these is a peculiar species of venomous wasp, called *ahorcadores* (hangmen), on account of the singular remedy which is believed to be the only means of averting the fatal effect of their sting: this is, "to plunge the

sufferer immediately into the water, or to compress the throat in the manner of hanging, till he is nearly exhausted." The vernacular language of Soconusco is the Mam, but the natives generally speak the Spanish. The whole district contained, in 1778, only twenty villages and about 9,000 inhabitants, being less than a seventh part of the whole population of Chiapa. Yet, "this district," says Juarros, "which in the present day is so much neglected, was, in former times, one of the most populous and opulent in the kingdom. The cocoa produced in it is still considered as superior to that of any other place in the world. The ancient capital was the large town of Soconusco, from which the province took its name, situated between the villages of San Domingo de Escuintla and Acocozagua. Besides the Indian population, it was the residence of about 200 Spaniards. But upwards of two centuries have now elapsed since this extensive town fell to decay and was entirely abandoned. The same fate has attended many other villages of the district. Previously to the annexation of the province of Soconusco to the intendancy of Ciudad Real, it was distinguished as a government,—a title given to the largest provinces only, and which sufficiently shews the estimation in which it was held."

To the west of Soconusco, proceeding along the coast, lies the *alcaldia-mayor* of Suchiltepec. It extends in length thirty-two leagues, and the breadth from the sea to the mountains is twenty-two leagues; but all the villages are comprised within the space of twelve leagues. The whole province contains only sixteen villages, and the inhabitants of these, of the salt-works, the farms, and the manufactories, do not exceed 27,000. Yet, the climate,

though warm, is less so than that of Soconusco, and the province is equally fertile, being well-wooded, and watered by sixteen rivers: it produces all the fruits, timber, gums, and medicinal plants, peculiar to the *tierras calientes*. The chief article of commerce is cocoa, which is reckoned quite equal, if not superior to that of Soconusco: the inhabitants trade also in cotton and *sapuyul*, the kernel of the sapote. "This is a fruit about six inches in length: the kernel, which is from two to three inches long, is enclosed in a shell like a filbert, and round the shell is a pulp of a fine scarlet colour, as beautiful to the eye as it is delicious to the taste: over this there is a hardish rind. The Indians mix the *sapuyul* with cocoa to make chocolate. The abundance of sapotes is so great in this province, that the fruit is thrown away to obtain the sapuyul, of which the consumption is so general, that, in Quezalttenango alone, the sale of it amounts to between four and five thousand dollars annually."

The principal places in this province are: *San Antonio Suchiltepec*, the ancient capital, now an insignificant village, but with a large and handsome church: *San Bartolome Mazatenango*, the present capital, situated in lat. 14° 20′ N.; long. 92° 26′ W.; population between 2 and 3,000: *San Lorenzo el Real*, remarkable only for the pilgrimages made by the people of the surrounding provinces to visit the image of *Nossa Senhora de la Candelaria* in its church: and the two adjacent villages of *San Antonio Retaluleuh* and *Santa Catherina Sacatepec*, which form the most commercial place in the province, serving as a depôt for the productions of Soconusco and Tehuantepec.

The language generally spoken by the natives, is the Quiché dialect.

The third province, following the line of coast, is that of Escuintla: * it extends 80 leagues along the shores of the Pacific, and is above 30 leagues in breadth; yet, the population is only 38,400 souls. In this province, the Spanish language is generally spoken, but the mother tongue is the Sinca. The only towns or villages worthy notice, are: *La Concepcion Escuintla*, the residence of the *alcalde-mayor*, situated in lat. 14° 15′ N., and long. 91° 46′ W.: *Guazacapan*, formerly a separate *alcaldia-mayor*, but now in decay: and *Santa Cruz Chiquimula*, two leagues from Guazacapan, now the most populous place in the district, containing upwards of 8,000 inhabitants, who are chiefly employed in the cultivation of rice, with which they supply the capital. The town of Escuintla is much frequented, Juarros says, by the inhabitants of Guatimala, in the months of January and February, for the purpose of bathing in the delightful river that flows close by it. The distance from Guatimala is seventeen leagues. It contains a magnificent parish church, and an oratory dedicated to San Sebastian: there were formerly four other chapels, which have fallen to decay. About three leagues from the town is the small village of *Masagua*, which, like San Lorenzo in Suchiltepec, contains a wonder-working image of the Virgin, which attracts crowds of pilgrims.

Of the numerous rivers that water this province, the most considerable is the *Michatoyat*, which flows out of the lake Amatitan: after the course of a few leagues, it has a beautiful fall, called the falls of San

* *Itzcuintli*, in the Aztec or Mexican language, signifies *dog*.

Pedro Martin. The *Río de los Esclavos* (slave river) is distinguished by the bridge built over it in 1592, by far the handsomest and best constructed in the kingdom: it is 128 yards in length, 18 yards in breadth, and has eleven arches. The river is of great depth, and, in the rainy seasons, is so much swelled, that, before the bridge was built, the communication was then cut off between the eastern provinces and the capital. Notwithstanding the great height of the bridge, the floods are sometimes so high as to cover it, and have repeatedly occasioned serious damage. It derives its name from the circumstance of Alvarado's having punished some of the refractory Indians in this quarter by branding them as slaves. The river *Guacalat*, which rises in the province of Chimaltenango, flows by the site of Old Guatimala, where it is called the Magdalena: it is then joined by the *Rio Pensativo*, and after entering the province of Escuintla, receives so many tributary streams as to become navigable, and finally disembogues into the Pacific, where it forms the bar of Istapa, celebrated for being the place where Alvarado equipped his armaments in the years 1534 and 1539. "This place," says Juarros, "is highly deserving of notice in a commercial point of view, as it affords every convenience and advantage for carrying on an extensive traffic in the Pacific. Its contiguity to the city of Guatimala would enable speculators to obtain all the productions of the country at a moderate rate, which could be conveyed by land-carriage to the place of embarkation at a trifling expense, on a road that was opened and levelled in 1539, for the purpose of transporting upon carriages some of Alvarado's small vessels. There is excellent anchorage, well sheltered on every point; there are neither reefs nor shallows, and the entrance is per-

fectly safe and easy. A redoubt, with four or six pieces of cannon, would afford protection to the shipping; and for the construction of such a defence, there are many eligible points. With respect to ship-building, the advantages are of still greater importance, as wood of the best quality is found in the neighbourhood, in quantities inexhaustible; for the fertility of the land is so great, and its quality so peculiarly adapted to the growth of timber, that, after a tree is felled, the root will send out five or six shoots that, in four years, become trees of considerable girth and height. The cedars are of immense size, some exceeding seven fathoms in circumference. The wood called *palo de maria*, excellent for masts, is in very great abundance. Cordage is still more plentiful; for, on every part of this coast, the *pita* grows luxuriantly and profusely, which is much superior for the manufacture of cables and other ropes, to the *esparto* (*genista hispanica*). Pitch and tar are both good and cheap in the valley of Jumais. Freights of cocoa and other articles of agricultural produce, planks of cedar and caoba-wood, so much esteemed for cabinet-work, may be procured here to almost any extent. Notwithstanding all the inducements and facilities for carrying on an important traffic which this place offers, but little success has hitherto attended the various experiments that have been tried." The little trade carried on by this province, is confined to fish, salt, maize, bananas, sapotes, and other fruits, which are carried to the market of Guatimala.

The most remarkable natural curiosity in Escuintla, is the rock called *La Peña de Mirandilla*. Juarros describes it as "a huge promontory of live rock, so lofty as to be seen at many leagues' distance, the summit presenting a most correct resemblance of a large

trunk or chest; and what appears to be the lid, is perforated from side to side so exactly as to admit of the light passing through." "These openings have undoubtedly," he adds, "been made by lightning, as, either from the great elevation of this vast pile, or from the metallic attraction of its mass, in which many veins of tin are apparent, the electric fluid is invariably observed to strike against its surface, in the frequent thunder-storms that take place in this part."

Like the other maritime provinces on the western coast, Escuintla is infested by immense numbers of noxious animals and reptiles. Among these, not the least formidable are the warrior-ants (*hormigas guerreras*), who are double the size of the common ant, and always move in regular array, like an army. "Wherever they enter a house, they spread all over it, and clear it so effectually as not to leave a single worm, reptile, or vermin of any sort, behind them when they depart. To the larger creatures, such as snakes, scorpions, toads, rats, &c. they are formidable from their numbers: in attacking these animals, they adhere so closely to their bodies that they soon kill them, and devour them to the bones. When they have cleansed one house, they quit it, and proceed to another." Juarros adds to this account a very marvellous property of these beneficent marauders. "If any injury be done to them when in the house, they revenge it by biting or stinging the assailant, and immediately retreat, leaving the vermin untouched!"*

* There is a Spanish saying, *No ay criatura tan libre, a quien falta su alguacil:* There is no creature so free as to be without its *alguacil* (police-officer). Snakes and scorpions, according to this account, are not excepted from this general law. In like manner, the great American fire-fly preys upon mosquitoes and other gnats;

This same writer describes a remarkable species of snake, called by the Indians *tepulcuat*, which, he says, has two heads, one at each extremity, and can advance with facility in either direction without turning. But he does not affirm that he ever *saw* one of these monstrous reptiles, and no mention of them occurs in Alcedo's Dictionary. The *danta* or tapir, and the *cayman* or alligator, are found in this province, and, among other birds, the *guaycamayo* or macaw. The vegetable productions are numerous and valuable. The most esteemed is the banana, (here called *gordo*,) which, says Juarros, "for delicacy of flavour, is superior to the *anana* (pine-apple), the *guanabana*, or the *chicozapote* (little sapote or medlar), and, for beauty of colour, to the scarlet sapote: being, perhaps, more extensively useful than any other fruit, it forms a principal article in the traffic of the province. In the first place, it furnishes a substantial food, each fruit yielding a large quantity of nutritive matter, without skin, stone, or other inedible part. Poor people eat it both in a ripe and an immature state, but others only in a mature state, as it then has a most agreeable flavour. Dried in the sun, it has an exquisite taste, and is greatly superior to the dried figs brought from Europe; it is also eaten boiled, roasted, and fried with sugar; it furnishes the chief materials for several kinds of savoury stews; and finally, it supplies the place of maize. Fuentes says, that the plantains, dried in an oven, then peeled and pounded to a paste, and pressed

the toad is said to be an excellent fly-catcher; snakes are good mousers; and the mouse is the enemy of the cock-roach. "We have not taken animals enough into alliance with us," says the Author of Madoc; "the gull should be taught to catch fish for us in the sea, the otter in fresh water. In hot countries, a reward should be offered to the man who could discover what insect fed upon *ficus*."—*Notes to Madoc*, vol. ii. p. 323.

into a vessel, may, after being kept for about a fortnight, be dissolved in water and strained, and the liquor will make a sort of wine, not to be distinguished from that which is called *Ojo de Gallo*. The facility of cultivating this valuable fruit, and the great abundance of its produce, occasion its real worth to be but ill appreciated, and its extensive utility to be much neglected."* Among the other productions, are cinnamon wood (or *cascarilla de loxa*), tamarinds, cassia, long pepper, ginger, the root *suchilpactli*, *scorzonera*, *orejuela*, (the flowers of which are used to perfume and flavour chocolate,) and excellent cocoa. The wood already mentioned, called *palo de maria*, yields a sap that is esteemed for its medicinal properties in healing wounds and dissolving tumours. From the ule-tree is obtained a paper, made of its bark; and on piercing its trunk, a liquor exudes copiously, which, when boiled, becomes an excellent preservative of leather, rendering it completely water-proof.

The river Paza divides this province on the south-east, from the *alcaldia-mayor* of Zonzonate, (corrupted from Zezontlatl†,) a territory of very small extent, having only 18 leagues of coast and 13 leagues of breadth, but much better peopled; containing, within these limits, a population of 45,000 souls. *Santissima Trinidad de Zonzonate*, the head-town, is pleasantly situated on the *Rio Grande*, in lat. 13° 35′ N., and long. 90° 26′, about four leagues from the sea. It

* See for the importance and various uses of the banana, the fruit of the plantain-tree (*platano arton*, *zapalote*, or *musa paradisiaca*), vol. i. p. 180; and Humboldt, Pol. Ess., vol. ii. pp. 366–380.

† This word, in the Mexican language, is said to signify *many springs*, and is the name given to the provincial capital from the river on which it is situated, now called *Rio Grande*, which is formed by innumerable springs.

contains a spacious church, three oratories, four convents, royal magazines, and a treasury. The population, in 1778, amounted to 3,500, of whom nearly 500 were Spaniards. On the opposite side of the river, communicating with the town by a stone bridge, is a suburb called the *barria del angel*, with a chapel; and in the vicinity are three small Indian villages, numerous cottages, and gardens. The climate is very hot. *Acajutla*, the port of Zonzonate, is merely an open bay, without shelter; yet, notwithstanding the difficulties of the coast, it is the anchoring-place for ships coming from Peru with freights of wine, brandy, oils, olives, raisins, skins, and other produce; in return for which, they take back indigo, sarsaparilla, naphtha, tar, turpentine, balsam, amber, and other gums and resins, in which this province carries on a considerable commerce.* An inland trade is likewise carried on in mats, woven in different colours by the Indians, which are used in Guatimala as carpets. The province yields also cotton, cocoa, sugar, indigo, sessamum, and rice. The other chief places are *Aguachapa*, a large and flourishing town, in a district producing excellent sugar; and *Izalco*, containing two parishes, with a population exceeding 6,000. The volcano of Izalco, from which the town takes its name, is distinguished by its frequent eruptions: a very violent one took place in April 1798, which lasted for several days.

The fifth province, that of San Salvador, is of sufficient importance to be made an intendancy. It is bounded on the west by Zonzonate, on the east and

* About forty leagues north-west of the port of Acajutla, in the province of Escuintla, is a small bay, called in some maps, the port of Guatimala; but this, Juarros says, is an error: it is not a port, nor has it any shelter whatever.

north by Comayagua, and extends fifty leagues along the shores of the Pacific: its breadth is about thirty leagues. It is more numerously peopled than any other province, the number of inhabitants being upwards of 211,000. The Indians of this intendancy are highly civilised, and all speak Spanish. The most valuable trade of the whole country is carried on here, the principal branch of which is indigo, now become almost exclusively a production of this province. From the rich tract of country within this intendancy, called the Balsam coast, is obtained the richest balsam in the world.* The valuable plant which grows here in great abundance, not only yields both the white and the black balsam, but a nut from which is extracted the oil of balm, and a spirit called *aguardiente de balsamo*, is distilled from the flowers. There are said to be mines also of silver, iron, and lead.

The intendancy is divided into four districts. The first, proceeding from west to east, is that of *Santa Ana*. The climate in this district is milder than in any other part of the intendancy; the chief article of commerce is sugar, with some indigo, cattle, and sheep. The town of *Santa Ana Grande*, which gives name to the district, contained, in 1778, a population exceeding 6,000, of whom about 350 were Spaniards. *Chalchuapa* is a large, well-built village; the principal occupation of the inhabitants is breeding hogs. The best-built town in the district is *San Pedro Matapas*, situated about two leagues from the lake Guija, which communicates with the river Lempa, the largest in the kingdom. At its lowest ebb, that river is said to exceed 140 yards in breadth. The lake is about eight

* This balsam, says Juarros, has always been so highly esteemed, that, in 1562 and 1571, Popes Pius IV. and V. granted permission that the American balsam might be used in the holy chrism.

leagues in length and three in width, and abounds with fish. In the environs of Matapas are five iron founderies. The church is handsome and richly endowed: the population exceeds 4,000.

The city of *San Salvador*, which gives its name to the principal district, as well as to the whole intendancy, stands in a delightful valley, surrounded by mountains covered with wood, which terminate towards the north-east in a volcanic summit, that has caused at different periods great devastation by its eruptions: it is in lat. 13° 36′ N.; long. 89° 46′ W. The town was founded in 1528, with the view to keep the province of Cuscatlan (land of riches), as it was then called, in subjection. It was created a city by Charles the Fifth in 1545. Besides the church of San Salvador, there are four oratories, three convents, Dominican, Franciscan, and Mercedarian, a custom-house, a post-office, a tobacco-factory, and a town-house. The streets are laid out in right lines, the houses are commodious, and the markets are well supplied. The inhabitants, in 1778, were nearly 12,000, of whom 600 were Spaniards. The population has doubtless considerably increased since that time. The distance from Guatimala is 60 leagues E.S.E. The other principal towns of the district, are Nejapa, Tejutla, San Jacinto, Suchitoto, Cojutepec, Texacuangos, Olocuilta, Tonacatepec, Chalatenango, and Masagua. The trade of this district, which contains half the population of the intendancy, is chiefly confined to indigo, to which, indeed, the inhabitants devote their attention almost exclusively, so as to neglect the culture of other articles of prime necessity. "The cultivation of indigo," Humboldt says, "which is very general in Guatimala and Caraccas, is neglected in Mexico; and indigo is annually imported from Guatimala, where

the total produce of the plantations amounts to the value of twelve millions of livres. Raynal is wrong when he maintains that the Europeans introduced the cultivation of this valuable plant into America. Several species of *indigofera* are peculiar to the New Continent. Ferdinand Columbus, in the life of his father, mentions indigo among the productions of Hayti. Hernandez describes the process by which the natives separated the fecula from the juice of the plant; a process different from that now employed. The small cakes of indigo dried by fire, were called *mohuitli* or *tleuohuilli*: the plant was designated by the name *Xiuhquilipitzahuac*.* In Guatimala, the plant is called *Giquilite*, and the indigo prepared from it, *añil*: the former is the native name; the latter has passed into the Spanish language from the Arabic word *nix* or *nil*. Hernandez calls the Mexican indigo, *aniz*.

The district of *San Vicente* has a climate more intensely warm than San Salvador: its trade consists chiefly in tobacco and dyeing materials. The head town, *San Vicente de Austria*, otherwise called *Lorenzana*, is situated on the skirts of a lofty mountain, at the base of which are several caverns, wherein are some warm springs; the waters are extremely fetid, and "burst forth with an incredible noise." In different parts of the valley there are mineral springs of different temperature, and the whole region bears marks of volcanic phenomena. Two deep rivers, the Acaguapa and the Amapulta, nearly surround the town; the one skirting the northern side, the other flowing on the south; and at a short distance is a third river, called the San Christobal. These three

* Pol. Essay, vol. iii. p. 44.

streams are said to vary most remarkably in temperature. The waters of the Acaguapa are particularly cold, those of the Amapulta are warm, while the San Christobal is always of the temperature of the human body. The climate is warm and humid, but healthy. Besides the principal church of San Vicente, there is a very handsome one dedicated to *Nossa Senhora del Pilar*, erected at the sole cost of a private individual; it has three vaulted aisles of beautiful architecture, and is richly decorated. There is also an oratory of Calvary, and a Franciscan convent. It is 74 leagues from Guatimala, 14 leagues east of San Salvador, and 23 west of San Miguel. At the base of the volcano of San Vicente, and directly opposite the town of the same name, is the village of *Sacatecoluca*, "one of the finest in the kingdom," with a population of upwards of 5,000 persons. About a league from San Vicente, on the skirts of the same mountain, in a mild climate, is the large village of *Apastepec*, noted for its annual fair, held on the 1st of November, for the sale of dyeing woods, &c. The village of *Istepec* is celebrated for its tobacco; and at the adjoining village of *Tepetitan*, there is a royal tobacco-factory.

The fourth and most easterly district of the intendancy is that of *San Miguel*, the climate of which is intensely hot and insalubrious: the produce consists chiefly of indigo and tobacco. On the coast are two ports; one called Jiquilisco, the entrance of which is six leagues eastward of the bar of the river Lempa; it is shut in by several islands, that shelter and defend the anchorage. The other, called Conchagua, is a large bay, capable of receiving ships of any tonnage; it is situated on the confines of the province towards the district of Cholulteca. The city of *San Miguel de la Frontera*, situated in lat. 12° 50′ N., and long. 88°

46′ W., contains a good church, two convents, Franciscan and Mercedarian, an oratory, and a town-house; the population exceeds 6,000 souls. It was formerly much more populous. "Indeed," says Juarros, "the commercial advantages it enjoys, would render it one of the most numerously peopled places in the kingdom; but the insalubrity of the climate keeps down the number of the native residents, and deters others from taking up their abode in it." The inhabitants are said to be wealthy. It is 12 leagues from the sea, 37 from San Salvador, and 97 from Guatimala. The other towns are *San Alexis*, *Chapeltic*, and *San Juan Chinameca*. The last of these, situated in an elevated region, enjoys a mild and salubrious climate, and the soil produces all the species of grain, fruit, and vegetables peculiar to the temperate zone, with which it supplies the city of San Miguel. At Estanzuelas, a small village of Indians and Mulattoes, there is a mineral spring which has petrifying properties.

The whole of this fine province invites the especial attention of the geologist and naturalist, from the very circumstances which render it an undesirable residence. The violent earthquakes by which it has repeatedly been visited,* the three volcanoes of San Salvador, San Miguel, and San Vicente, (from the former two of which eruptions have happened within the memory of the natives,) the sulphureous springs in the valley of San Vicente, and other circumstances, indicate that the shores of the Pacific here form but an immense vault over the subterranean depositories of combustible matter which feed the volcanic furnaces.

* Those from which it has suffered the greatest injury, took place in the years 1575, 1593, 1625, 1656, and 1798.

There seems to be a repetition here of many of the phenomena which occur on the coast of Valladolid.* The volcanoes of San Salvador tower far above the neighbouring mountains, especially that of San Vicente. No account exists of any eruption from this volcano, but the numerous springs of warm water that descend from its sides, are all impregnated with sulphur; and on its northern flank is an aperture, called the *Infernillo*, which emits smoke or vapour like the *hornitos* of Jorullo. In this direction also are many other openings, filled with very hot water, in which may be heard a noise resembling that of a fluid in a state of ebullition, (a circumstance observed also in the *Malpays*,) and this noise is increased by the slightest agitation of the air, even by the human voice. On some parts of the mountain, we are told, is found a very white earth, commonly used for painting in distemper; in other parts are yellow, rose-coloured, purple, and blue earths; green copperas is also met with. These are doubtless pyrites. No information of a scientific kind is to be obtained from the vague accounts of the native writers. The altitude of the *volcan* is said to be so great that, in the upper regions, the cold is excessive; but, whether it rises into the region of snow, is not stated. Among the animals who inhabit it, are the wild boar and the danta or tapir.

The lakes of Guija (or Guixar) and Metapa form one of the most interesting features of this intendancy. They are said to communicate by a subterranean channel. The lake of Metapa, which is fed by the rivers Langue and Languetuyo, and has, apparently, no other outlet, by this means discharges its super-

* See p. 126 of this volume.

fluous waters.* The lake Guija, which is twenty leagues in extent, is also fed by the large river Mitlan, which, augmented in its long course by many tributary streams, discharges itself into the lake under the name of the river Ostua, near the village so called. The river Guija, a large and powerful stream, in no part fordable, flows out of the lake, and, after a winding course, joins the river Lempa. This latter river has its sources in the mountains of Esquipulas, in the province of Chiquimula. It is at first an inconsiderable rivulet called the Sesecapa; but, in a course of more than forty leagues, it receives the tribute of a great number of small streams, and after being joined by the Guija, rolls an immense volume of water towards the Pacific, where it discharges a little to the westward of the Bay of Jiquilisco, forming the boundary between the districts of San Vicente and San Miguel. The two lakes above-mentioned furnish to the whole district an inexhaustible supply of delicate fish. In the middle of that of Guija, is a large island most picturesquely clothed with wood, which gives cover to immense quantities of game. On this island, are the ruins of some ancient buildings, called by the natives *Tzacualpa* (old village), which are of sufficient extent to convey the idea of its having been a place of some importance.† Two other lakes are mentioned by Juarros, those of Texacuangos and Gilopango, which, he says, afford various kinds of fine fish, more than

* We say apparently, because the vague statement of Juarros requires to be verified by actual investigation.

† In the interior of the woods on this island, Fuentes states, that it had been affirmed on very respectable authority, that *satyrs* had been frequently seen. Juarros dismisses the assertion as undeserving of attention; yet, it might be worth inquiry, whether these woods may not conceal a species of anthropomorphous ape, or savages.

enough for the markets of San Salvador and a great portion of the intendancy; but he gives no account of their situation or extent.

Almost the whole of the tract of country which we have been describing, lies either within the regions called the *tierras calientes*, or occupies the southern declivity of the cordillera, the crests of which, "bristling with volcanic cones," stretch along the coast of the Pacific from the lake of Nicaragua to the bay of Tehuantepec. The province of Costa Rica likewise contains volcanoes. But the most remarkable are in the inland province of Sacatepec, which, as comprising both the ancient and the modern capital, will now claim our attention. It forms part of the territory designated in some geographical works by the name of Guatimala Proper.*

* In a recent geographical work, Guatimala is with singular inaccuracy described as containing eight provinces, viz. Chiapa, Vera Paz, Guatimala Proper, Soconusco, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Veragua. The latter belongs to New Granada. It is hard to say what is meant to be included in Guatimala Proper. Its boundaries are said to be Vera Paz and Chiapa on the N.E. (an obvious blunder for N.W.); Honduras on the E.; Nicaragua on the S.E.; and Oaxaca on the N. and W. Oaxaca neither lies in that direction, nor can it touch on Guatimala Proper, as Soconusco divides them. No notice is taken in this enumeration, of the important intendancy of San Salvador. Guatimala Proper, therefore, would, according to this statement, comprise the four maritime provinces of Suchiltepec, Escuintla, Zonzonate, and San Salvador, or the whole coast between Soconusco and Nicaragua, and the five midland provinces! It would more correctly be restricted to the three interior provinces, lying between Vera Paz on the north and Escuintla on the south, which composed the ancient Kachiquel or Guatimalan kingdom. In Alcedo's Dictionary, a work considered as a high authority, Guatimala is described with similar inaccuracy. It is stated to contain 13 provinces, viz. Soconusco, Chiapa, Suquitepec, Vera Paz, Honduras, *Icalcos*, San Salvador, San Miguel, Nicaragua, Xeres de la Choluteca, Tegusigalpa, and Costa Rica. These 13 provinces are said to be divided

VALLEY OF GUATIMALA.

THE province of Sacatepec, being of limited extent, though unusually populous, is only an *alcaldia-mayor*. It lies between the 14th and 15th parallels of north latitude, and between long. 90° 46′ and 91° 46′ W. It is not above 20 leagues in length, and is nearly as much in breadth, and contains upwards of 115,600 inhabitants. It is the most southern of the five interior provinces, and, together with the *alcaldias* of Chimaltenango and Solola, formed the ancient kingdom of Kachiquel. Within these contracted limits, the country presents a singular variety of surface and of climate. The soil, Juarros says, is favourable to the productions of every temperature. The Vale of Guatimala, known also by the name of Pasuya, seems to bear an analogy to that series of immense plains which encircle the capital of Mexico. It consists of nine basins or valleys, of varying elevation, comprised within one vast circuit, which extends from the mountains of Quezaltenango on the west, to the maritime province of Chiquimula on the east. Three of these valleys, those of Chimaltenango, Xilopetec, and Alotenango, are comprised within the *alcaldia-mayor* of Chimaltenango: the other six, which form the *alcaldia-mayor* of Sacatepec, are the valleys of Guatimala, Mixco, Sacatepec, Las Vacas, Mesas de Petapa, and Canales. We are unacquainted with the different

into 25 governments and alcaldias-mayores; and afterwards, the *province* of Guatimala, (which is not mentioned in the first enumeration,) is stated to be one of the *three* composing the kingdom. It is needless to point out the gross inaccuracies in this account. Icalcos is probably Izalco in Zonzonate, which does not appear to have ever formed either an *alcaldia-mayor* or a *corregimiento*. The same remark applies to San Miguel.

elevations of these valleys, as no Humboldt has hitherto explored this region; but there is reason to suppose that they will be found to vary not less remarkably in their climate and productions, than the four Mexican plateaus.* Juarros states, that the valley of Chimaltenango enjoys a cold, dry, but healthy climate, and that it is of so exactly proportioned a level, that the drainage waters of one half of the town of Santa Ana descend into the Atlantic, and those of the other half into the Pacific. The soil produces wheat, maize, and European fruits. The vicinity of Almolonga and San Gaspar in Sacatepec, used to supply the capital with pulque or maguey wine, until the governor, Andres de los Navas, prohibited the traffic under pain of excommunication; while, in the valley of Xilotepec, the sugar-cane is cultivated.

That which is properly called the Valley of Guatimala† occupies nearly the centre of the chain of plateaus, having the valleys of Chimaltenango and Xilotepec on the north, that of Mixco on the east, that of Petapa on the south, and that of Alotenango on the west. Old Guatimala stands nearly in the centre of the plain, encompassed by eleven suburbs, which are environed by no fewer than thirty-one villages, the most distant of which is not two leagues from the city: some of these are on the plain, others on the declivities of the mountains. The

* The valley of Toluca is 8,530 feet, the valley of Tenochtitlan 7,460 feet, the valley of Actopan 6,450 feet, and the valley of Istla 3,300 feet, above the level of the sea. They differ as much in their climate as in their elevation, each being adapted to a different species of cultivation. The last, which is the least elevated, admits of the growth of the sugar-cane; the third is adapted for that of cotton; the second, for the cultivation of European grain; and the first, for agave-plantations.—HUMBOLDT, *Pol. Essay*, vol. i. p. 56.

† Its ancient name was the valley of Tuerto or Panchoi.

present inhabitants are, it seems, indebted to the Spanish conquerors for this succession of villages. It appears from the records of the *cabildo*, that soon after the city was founded, a distribution was made, in lots, of the lands in the valley. It being found, however, that some of the worthy citizens had, in the scramble, got possession of larger portions than fell to their share, while others had none, in a meeting of the *cabildo* held in April 1528, it was determined to equalise the distribution by dividing the whole valley into lots called *caballerias* and *peonerias*; the former, 1,000 paces long by 600 in breadth; the latter, half that quantity. To a horse-soldier was assigned a *caballeria*; to a foot-soldier, a *peoneria*. These lots were laid out by the proprietors, some as maize-fields, others as gardens, or for other agricultural labours. "At this period," continues Juarros, "there were great numbers of the unreclaimed natives wandering about in the forests and on the mountains, without any kind of subjection or government, who were very detrimental to those who had already been converted. The Spaniards, desirous of applying a remedy to this evil, began to devise means of collecting them together, and establishing them in small villages. This design was still further promoted by various edicts from the king, particularly one dated June 10, 1540, which especially ordered that all methods should be tried to induce the Indians to live in societies and form villages, to accomplish more effectually the important object of civilising and instructing them. As the wild Indians disregarded all the friendly offers that were made them, and shewed but little inclination to listen to the preaching of the missionaries, the governor gave permission to *hunt them out of their retreats*. In consequence, the officers, each taking ten or twelve

soldiers, sallied forth on the darkest nights, conducted by expert guides, to an Indian hovel, where they frequently seized six, eight, or ten Indians, whom they brought home and placed on their maize-plantations and other works, under the superintendence of careful persons. These excursions were repeated until sixty, eighty, two hundred, three hundred, or even greater numbers were got together and formed into a village, on which was usually bestowed the name of the saint of the proprietor's peculiar devotion, with the addition of the surname of his family. Thus, Luis de Bivar established the village called San Gaspar Bivar; Ignacio de Bobadilla, that of Santa Catarina Bobadilla; Alonzo de Zamora, that of Santiago Zamora, at a place where he used to wash the soil to find gold; and Gabriel Cabrera, that of San Lucas Cabrera.* Several others are designated by the dignity or office held by their founders; as, San Juan del Obispo, founded by Bishop Francisco de Marroquin; San Andres Dean, founded by Dean Juan Alonzo; and San Pedro Tesorero, established by the treasurer, Pedro de Becerra. San Miguel Milpa Dueñas, founded by Alvarado, is named from a portion of land which he had ordered to be sown with maize for the benefit of the widows of his soldiers; San Dionisio Pastores is said to have received its name from the inhabitants having tended Alvarado's flocks; and San Luis de las Carretas was so called because the inhabitants were chiefly cartwrights. The in-

* Others are enumerated by Juarros, which we have not thought it necessary to particularise. San Lucas Cabrera is also called San Lucas *Yehanzuquit*, which signifies, in the Pipil language, house of mud; deriving this appellative from some wells near the village, "in which, if any kind of linen be laid for three or four days, it will be dyed a most beautiful black, and the colour so durable that it cannot be discharged."—JUARROS, p. 479, *note*.

habitants of the city derive many advantages from these numerous places: besides the supply of every kind of provisions, they draw plenty of hands for their different works and manufactories. If a person is in want of bricklayers, he is sure of finding them at Jocotenango, Santa Ana, and San Gaspar; masons at San Cristoval (the lower); gardeners at San Pedro de las Huertas; bakers at Santa Ana; and butchers at Santa Isabel. The inhabitants of Almolonga supply the city with fruit of all kinds, either the growth of their own gardens, or procured from other villages towards the mountains or the sea-shore; Almolonga and Upper San Cristoval furnish all kinds of flowers; San Gaspar and Almolonga used to supply pulque; and San Pedro de las Huertas sends cauliflowers, cabbages, onions, and every other description of garden vegetables. Wood, *coals*, and similar articles of domestic necessity, are brought from the other villages."

This description, while it discloses the unprincipled method pursued by the Spanish conquerors for subjugating and *converting* the natives, shews that the site of Alvarado's capital was not injudiciously chosen. The spot first selected was about a league to the south-west of Old Guatimala, between the two volcanoes, near the place now called Almolonga, and sometimes *Ciudad Vieja* (the old city).* The settlement here, Juarros states, was meant to be a tem-

* It is a disputed point among the Spanish historians, whether the first settlement was at Almolonga, or in the capital of King Sinacam, the Indian city of Tecpanguatemala, which occupied the site of *San Miguel Tzacualpa*, a village at a short distance. Juarros says, that directly above Tzacualpa (which signifies old town), may be distinguished the deep channel made by the torrent of water and detached masses of rock by which the old town was overwhelmed.

porary one, until a more convenient spot could be selected; but, "not discovering another situation offering superior advantages, the inhabitants determined to remain here, and to extend their buildings a little to the eastward, upon the skirt of the mountain called the *Volcan de Agua;* a place of great fertility, very pleasant, under a fine climate, healthy, and abundantly supplied with excellent water. On this spot, they commenced building the city on the 22d of November, 1527; and in a short time they had erected a decent cathedral, convents of Dominicans, Franciscans, and Mercedarians, two *hermitas*, a town-house, and a hospital. After fourteen years' progress, further improvements were stopped by a calamity that finally decided its fate. On the night of September 11, 1541, an eruption of water from the mountain took place, when a torrent so immense rolled down from the summit, sweeping before it large trees and enormous rocks, that the city was overwhelmed, the buildings destroyed, and great part of the inhabitants buried beneath the ruins.* This irreparable disaster

* The account which Juarros gives of this dreadful catastrophe, is as follows. "It had rained incessantly and with great violence on the three preceding days, particularly on the night of the 10th, when the water descended more like the torrent of a cataract than rain. The fury of the wind, the incessant, appalling lightning and dreadful thunder, were indescribable. The general terror was increased by eruptions from the volcano to such a degree, that, in this combination of horrors, the inhabitants imagined the final destruction of the world was at hand. At two o'clock on the morning of the 11th, the vibrations of the earth were so violent, that the people were unable to stand. The shocks were accompanied with a terrible subterranean noise, which spread universal dismay. Shortly afterward, an immense torrent of water rushed down from the summit of the mountain, forcing away with it enormous fragments of rocks and large trees, which, descending upon the ill-fated town, overwhelmed and destroyed almost all the houses, and buried a great number of inhabitants under the ruins."

compelled the survivors to seek another settlement; and they fixed upon the place where Old Guatimala now stands, about a league north-east of *Ciudad Vieja.*"

Among the victims of this catastrophe, was Doña Beatriz de la Cueba, the widow of Pedro de Alvarado, who had been elected governess of the city. While the survivors were holding a council in the cathedral on the 18th of September, a week after the eruption, to deliberate on the removal of the city, several shocks of earthquake compelled them to seek their safety by flight. At a subsequent meeting, on the 27th, the removal was resolved on by a majority of forty-three votes against five. The situations at first proposed for the new city were, the valleys of Alotenango and Chimaltenango; and a considerable majority gave the preference to the latter. But, at this juncture, there arrived an engineer sent out by the Spanish Government, Juan Battista Antonelli, in consequence of whose representation, both plans were given up, and the valley of Tuerto, or Panchoi, was finally chosen as the site for the city of Santiago. The council in which this decision was made, took place on the 22d of October, 1541; and such was the zeal of the people in carrying on the work, that by the May following, a great part of the city was inhabited, although the complete demarcation of it was not finished before November. It was the metropolis of the kingdom until the year 1776, when the capital was transferred to the valley of Mixco, in consequence of the devastation occasioned by the earthquake of 1773.

OLD GUATIMALA.

OLD GUATIMALA (*la Antigua Guatimala*), anciently a city and the metropolis of the kingdom, now ranks only as a town; it is, however, as being the residence of the *alcalde mayor*, the provincial capital of Sacatepec. Its proper title is *Santiago* (or San Jago) *de los Caballeros de Guatimala*. Saint Cecilia is also considered as the co-patroness of the city, in consequence of a memorable victory obtained over the Kachiquel Indians, who had revolted, in 1526.* It was constituted an episcopal see in 1534 by Pope

* The history of this revolt is briefly given by Juarros. When Pedro de Alvarado left Guatimala in 1526 to wait upon Cortes, he left his brother Gonzalo lieutenant of the newly acquired kingdom during his absence. Impelled by avarice, Gonzalo determined to improve the favourable opportunity of enriching himself. "With this view, he demanded an exorbitant tribute from the populous village of Pitinamit, requiring that 800 of the Indians should each bring him, every day, a reed of the size of his little finger filled with fine gold, under the penalty of being taken as slaves. The unhappy victims of his rapacity exerted themselves to the utmost to pay this iniquitous exaction; but all their endeavours being ineffectual, the governor went to the village, inflicted severe punishments, and threatened them with death, should his demand be neglected. The natives, driven to desperation by these vexations, invoked all the towns of the Kachiquel nation to their aid, and soon collected a force of 30,000 combatants. A part of this host was detached to defend the mountains in the road from Petapa, by which they feared Pedro de Alvarado might return, while the main body suddenly fell upon the town, and, taking the inhabitants by surprise, killed many, wounded more, and put the rest to flight. After this defeat, the city was abandoned by the Spaniards, until the return of Alvarado, who, without loss of time, exerted himself to regain what they had been deprived of, and to reduce the Kachiquels once more to subjection. This was not done without great trouble, and several severe contests. He at last vanquished them, after a very obstinate battle, and they then submitted. This victory was obtained on the 22d of November, St. Cecilia's day."

Paul III., and Pope Benedict XIV. in 1742 raised it to the rank of a metropolitan city. "It stands in a delightful valley, shut in by mountains and hills that always retain their verdure, and encompassed by meadows and lands which supply pasturage to large herds of cattle. Two rivers run through the valley, and supply to the gardens and meadows, the farms and country-houses, every convenience for irrigation. The climate is extremely agreeable, and of so happy a medium, that neither heat nor cold ever predominates to the injury of vegetation; but a perpetual spring presents its varied bounties. The city extends about twelve squares of houses (*manzanas*)* in the narrowest part: the streets are broad, straight, and well paved, running in right lines from east to west and from north to south, except in the suburbs, where are many both narrow and irregular. There are numerous fountains, supplied from three different springs; and water is also diffused into all parts of the city by pipes, so that there is scarcely a house without three or four cisterns regularly replenished. There are large reservoirs in the streets and public places: that in the Great Square is worthy of notice, being constructed entirely of stone, very well wrought, and filled by two different streams that fall into it on opposite sides. The consistorial houses deserve attention, both for the solidity of building, and their excellent distribution, as well as for an elegant corridor fronting the square, formed by columns and arches of masonry. There are thirty-eight edifices appropriated to religious worship and establishments, viz. the cathedral, three parish churches, and sixteen

* A *manzana* is a solid square of houses, formed by the intersection of streets at right angles, and varying in extent from 150 to 350 yards in front.

others, eight convents for men, eight for women, the congregations of San Felipe Neri, and of Calvary, and eleven chapels. The cathedral is a magnificent temple, more than 300 feet long, 120 broad, and nearly seventy high, lighted by fifty windows; it has three aisles, and eight chapels on each side, of which those of the Sanctuary and Nuestra Señora del Socorro are very spacious; the decorations consist of beautiful statues, paintings of the best masters, many inestimable relics, and numerous utensils of gold and silver. The grand altar stood under a cupola, supported by sixteen columns, faced with tortoiseshell, and adorned with medallions in bronze of exquisite workmanship; on the cornice are placed the statues of the Virgin and the twelve apostles in ivory. In this sumptuous edifice, to which there are seven spacious entrances, repose the ashes of Pedro de Alvarado, the conqueror of the country, of Francisco Marroquin, the first bishop, eight of his successors, and of many other illustrious men. The church of San Domingo deserved notice by its elegant design, great elevation, capacious vestibule, and splendid decorations, among which was a statue of the Virgin del Rosario, nearly six feet in height, of massive silver. In the church of San Francisco, one of the largest in the city, were three alcoves, beautifully and richly adorned, which contributed greatly to the splendour of the grand altar; the singularly curious chapel of Our Lady of Loretto, in which the image of the Virgin of Alcantara * is worshipped; at the portal

* "This image is not without its miracle, for it appears (from records juridically authenticated, obtained in the year 1601, and preserved in the archives of the convent), that it is the identical image which was worshipped at Alcantara in Estremadura, where the tradition was, that it had been found in the river Tagus, en-

there are several statues of saints done in stucco, and enamelled, which far exceed any thing of the kind in the kingdom. But the greatest treasure in popular estimation belonging to the church, are the mortal relics of Pedro de San José de Betancurt,* that are preserved under the safeguard of three keys, in a niche on the left hand side of the presbytery. The church of the College of Jesuits, and that of Nuestra Señora de la Merced, each spacious, and with three aisles, possess their due share of magnificence. The Dominican, Franciscan, and Mercedarian convents, are the most remarkable for their size, solidity of the building, neatness, and convenient arrangement of their respective offices. Of the nunneries, that of La Conception is the largest; it is said to have been formerly inhabited by upwards of 1,000 persons, nuns, pupils, and servants."†

In the time of its prosperity, as the capital of the kingdom, Old Guatimala was the residence of the captain-general, who was also president of the chancery and royal *audiencia*. In 1676, the royal and pontifical university of San Carlos was founded by Charles II., on which, in 1687, Pope Innocent XI. conferred all the privileges enjoyed by the universities of Mexico and Lima. This city has given birth to many illustrious individuals. Among these, the

closed with the infant Don Pelayo, in a chest, and the preservation of the prince was attributed to the special protection of his virgin patroness."

* "Pedro de Betancurt was a priest, native of the island of Teneriffe, who settled in Guatimala; he was held in great estimation by the populace, who believed that he wrought miracles: the subject of his beatification was warmly debated in the Romish conclave, but not carried; however, Pope Clement XIV. declared that his virtues were entitled to the most heroic degree."

† Juarros, pp. 112—14.

native Historian above cited enumerates, Christoval Flores, a Franciscan, of one of the noblest families of Guatimala, who suffered a cruel death for preaching Christianity in Algiers in 1627; Diego de la Cerda, of the order of *La Merced*, who was torn in pieces by four horses at Constantinople for preaching Christianity; Blas de Morales, a Franciscan of noble race and exemplary virtue, who died in 1646; Alonzo Sanchez, a secular priest, who, for his eminent virtues, was honoured with a public funeral,—he died in 1652; Juan Bautista Alvarez de Toledo, of an illustrious family, who, after filling the Duns Scotus professorship in the university of San Carlos, was raised to the episcopal chairs, successively, of Chiapa, Guatimala, and Guadalaxara, and died in his native country in 1726; Juan de Padilla, a secular ecclesiastic of considerable literary attainments, who died in 1749; Miguel de Zilieza y Velasco, of a noble family, bishop of Cuidad Real, where he died in 1768; Antonio de Pineda y Ramirez, who accompanied Malaspina, in a scientific capacity, in his voyage round the globe; Ignacio Ceballos, dean of Mexico and Seville, member of the Royal Spanish Academy, and one of the compilers of the Spanish Dictionary; and lastly, Miguel Gutierres, an ex-jesuit, who died at Rome in 1794,—his life has been written in Latin by Luis Maniero.

The history of Old Guatimala is singularly disastrous. Juarros devotes a separate chapter to its calamities, beginning with the Kachiquel revolt of 1526, and the destruction of the *Ciudad Vieja*, and bringing down the story to the fatal earthquake of 1773.* Although

* In these disastrous annals of the first city, it is recorded, that in 1532, "the vicinity of the city was ravaged, and the inhabitants thrown into consternation, by a *lion* of uncommon magnitude and

the inhabitants had changed the situation of the town, they could not evade the calamities that still awaited them. In 1558, an epidemic disorder, attended with a violent bleeding at the nose, swept away great numbers of the inhabitants. In 1565, a severe shock of earthquake seriously damaged many of the principal buildings. The earthquakes of 1575, 76, and 77, were not less ruinous. "On the 27th of December, 1581, the population was again alarmed by the volcano, which began to emit fire; and so great was the quantity of ashes thrown out and spread in the air, that the sun was entirely obscured, and artificial light was necessary in the city at mid-day. Processions were formed to implore the Divine intercession; people confessed themselves aloud in the streets, being persuaded they were on the point of suffering some awful visitation of Providence. A northerly wind, however, at last relieved them from their fears, by dispersing the ashes towards the Pacific Ocean, and again allowing them to view the splendour of the sun. On the 14th of January, 1582, the mountain vomited fire with great force for twenty-four hours successively.

"The years 1585 and 6 were dreadful in the extreme. On January 16, of the former, earthquakes were felt, and they continued through that and the

ferocity," (probably the *puma*, or *mizth*, is meant,) "which descended from the forests on the *Volcan de Agua*, and committed great devastations among the herds. A reward of 25 gold dollars, or 100 bushels of wheat, was offered by the town council to any person that could kill it; but the animal escaped even from a general hunting-party of the whole city, with Alvarado at the head of it. After five or six months' continual depredations, he was killed by a herdsman, who received the promised reward." In February 1536, a fire, originating in a blacksmith's shop, destroyed a great number of houses, in consequence of which forges were prohibited within the city.

following year so frequently, that not an interval of eight days elapsed, during the whole period, without a shock more or less violent. Fire issued incessantly, for months together, from the mountain, and greatly increased the general consternation. The most disastrous of these eruptions took place on the 23d Dec., 1586, when the major part of the city again became a heap of ruins, burying under them many of the unfortunate inhabitants; the earth shook with such violence, that the tops of the high ridges were torn off, and deep chasms formed in various parts of the level ground.

"In 1601, a pestilential distemper carried off great numbers. It raged with so much malignity, that three days generally terminated the existence of such as were affected by it. In 1607, fresh shocks of earthquakes were felt, causing great damage to several of the buildings, and killing many people. These terrible visitations did not return again until the year 1640. In 1620, a fiery meteor appeared, and filled the inhabitants with terror and dismay, from their ignorance of the nature of such phenomena: similar appearances at the present day, as philosophy is better understood, would excite only admiration. Meteors of the same description appeared on the 14th April, 1649; the 23d March, 1680; the 20th January, 1681; in January 1688; and on the 18th of September, 1691.

"In the month of January 1623, the volcanò was observed to be again in action; it threw out much flame and thick smoke, accompanied by violent and loud reports, to the great terror of the inhabitants, but fortunately without injury.

"On the 18th of February, 1651, about one o'clock, afternoon, a most extraordinary subterranean noise

was heard, and immediately followed by three violent shocks, at very short intervals from each other, which threw down many buildings, and damaged others; the tiles from the roofs of the houses were dispersed in all directions, like light straws by a gust of wind; the bells of the churches were rung by the vibrations; masses of rock were detached from the mountains; and even the wild beasts were so terrified, that, losing their natural instinct, they quitted their retreats, and sought shelter from the habitations of men. Among these, a lion of great size and fierceness entered the city, on the southern side, and advanced into the middle of it; he tore down a paper fixed against one of the consistorial houses, and retreated by the streets on the north side. These shocks were repeated frequently, until the 13th of April.

"Very few years passed in which this devoted place did not experience the horrors of these exterminating phenomena; for, enumerating only such as caused serious damage since 1651, the worst were those in March 1679; 22d July, 1681; May 1683; August 1684; September and October 1687; and the 12th of February, 1689, which, a writer of that period asserts, was even more disastrous than the one in 1651.

"The year 1686 brought with it another dreadful epidemic, which, in three months, swept away a tenth part of the inhabitants. Some of them died suddenly; others expired under the most acute pains of the head, breast, and bowels. No remedy was discovered that could check its destructive progress, although many of the deceased were opened, to endeavour, by that means, to come at the cause of the disorder. So great was the number of the infected, that there was not a sufficient number of priests to administer to them the religious rites. The bells

were no longer tolled for the dead individually, and the corpses were buried, *en masse*, in a common grave. From the capital, the pestilence spread to the neighbouring villages, and thence to the more remote ones, causing dreadful havoc, particularly among the most robust of the inhabitants.*

"Pursuing this narrative of misfortunes, the next in succession happened on the 1st of February, 1705; when the mountain again disgorged ashes and thick smoke in such abundance, that the sun was entirely obscured; and the Guatimaltecans, like the ancient Egyptians, were enveloped in impenetrable darkness at noon-day, which continued for several hours. In 1710, a violent eruption of smoke and ignited stones took place; but no serious injury was sustained. The year 1717 was memorable: on the night of August 27th, the mountain began to emit flames, attended by a continued subterranean rumbling noise. On the night of the 28th, the eruption increased to great violence, and very much alarmed the inhabitants. The images of saints were carried in procession, public prayers were put up, day after day; but the

* The author makes no mention of the manner in which this epidemic terminated; but, says his Translator, "religious ingenuity was not tardy in producing a miracle to remove so dreadful a scourge. The inhabitants being grievously alarmed at the frightful havoc among them, resolved upon the expedient of addressing public prayers to the Virgin for her interference; they carried the image that is worshipped in the village of Almolonga, thence to the church of Calvary, in the city, in solemn procession. The rogation continued three days; on the last day, about two in the afternoon, the face of the sacred effigy was perceived to be in a profuse perspiration for a long time: this prodigy was immediately certified officially by a couple of notaries who were present. In the evening, the image was restored to the village with becoming solemnity, and from that day the pestilence ceased; no more persons were infected, and those who were sick recovered immediately."

terrifying eruption still continued, and was followed by frequent shocks, at intervals, for more than four months. At last, on the night of September 29th, the fate of Guatimala appeared to be decided, and inevitable destruction seemed to be at hand. Great was the ruin among the public edifices; many of the houses were thrown down, and nearly all that remained were dreadfully injured; but the greatest devastation was seen in the churches. The inhabitants, from what they actually saw, and from what their terrors suggested to them, expected the total subversion of the place; and nearly all sought refuge in the villages adjacent. After this disaster, they solicited permission of the Government to remove to any other spot that might be judged less exposed to the effects of the volcano; but, by the time the council of the Indies transmitted a license for the removal, they had recovered from the panic, returned to their dilapidated dwellings, had repaired a great part of the city, and no longer thought of making the transfer.

"In 1732, during the month of May, the volcano once more seemed to threaten fresh disasters, but nothing more than an eruption of flame, that continued many days, then took place. In 1733, the city suffered very grievously from the small-pox, which, in one month, swept away 1,500 persons. This misfortune was followed, in June 1736, by a violent tempest, that threw down several houses, and many persons were buried under the ruins.

"On the 27th August, 1737, the mountain was again in commotion, and discharged flames and smoke for some days successively; numerous small craters, that emitted both fire and smoke, opened on the sides of it; and, on the 24th of September, smart shocks of

earthquake took place, but fortunately without causing injury. On September 21, 1749, another violent tempest began, and continued for three days; it was attended with an incessant heavy rain: the torrents of water that descended from the surrounding mountains caused much damage in the villages on the plain below. On the 4th of March, 1751, two very severe shocks were felt; the first about eight o'clock in the morning, and the other at two in the afternoon: much injury was done by them, chiefly to the churches.

"On the 8th of October, 1762, a heavy rain began, and lasted until the morning of the 9th; by which the rivers were so increased, that great part of the country was inundated: on this occasion the large village of Petapa was destroyed, and the division of the city called the Barrio de los Remedios was laid under water.

"The year 1773 was the most melancholy epoch in the annals of this metropolis; it was then destroyed, and, as the capital, rose no more from its ruins. Since the year 1751, there had been no considerable misfortune sustained; for although, in 1757, there had been the shock, distinguished by the natives as the earthquake of St. Francis, and, in 1765, that of the Holy Trinity, which spread devastation over the province of Chiquimula; and afterward, that denominated St. Raphael's, which grievously devastated the province of Suchiltepeques; yet, neither of these extended to the capital with sufficient violence to cause any extraordinary damage. In the month of May, some few slight shocks were perceived; and, on the 11th of June, a very violent one took place. Its duration was considerable; many houses and several churches were much injured: during the whole of

the night, the shocks were repeated at short intervals, and, for some days afterward, with less frequency. About four o'clock, on the afternoon of July 29th, a tremendous vibration was felt, and shortly after began the dreadful convulsion that decided the fate of the unfortunate city. It is difficult, even for those who were witnesses of this terrible catastrophe, to describe its duration, or the variety of its undulation, so entirely did terror and the apprehension of immediate annihilation, absorb all powers of reflection. For several days these shocks continued, and sometimes in such quick succession, that many took place in the short space of fifteen minutes. On the 7th September, there was another, which threw down most of the buildings that were damaged on the 29th of July; and, on the 13th December, one still more violent terminated the work of destruction. To this memorable calamity succeeded a schism among the inhabitants, that caused many disagreeable dissensions. Two parties were formed; the one, terrified by the recent chastisement of Providence, and bearing in mind the miseries that had been so often endured from similar visitations, was desirous of establishing the city anew, in a situation further away from the mountain, and less exposed to such troubles. The other, arguing from constant experience, that there was scarcely a district throughout the kingdom which was not, at times, subject to the same inconvenience, contended that it would be better to rebuild the city on its present site, than to abandon the delightful climate, the fertile soil, excellent water, and the thousand other advantages they enjoyed in it; and that the very ruins of their former dwellings would furnish part of the materials for reconstructing them. The people had not well recovered from the consterna-

tion inflicted by the events of the fatal 29th of July, when a meeting was convoked, for the purpose of collecting the sense of the inhabitants on the subject of the removal. This assembly took place on the 4th of August; the governor presided, and it was attended by the archbishop, and all the persons of consequence who remained on the spot. In this meeting it was determined that all the public authorities should remove, provisionally, to the little village of La Hermita, until the valleys of Jalapa and Las Vacas could be surveyed, and until the king's pleasure could be ascertained on the subject. A member of the audiencia, two prebends of the cathedral, a regidor, and one of the principal inhabitants, were deputed to examine the two valleys. On the 6th of September, the governor and all the tribunals withdrew to La Hermita. The surveys of the just-mentioned places being completed, the inhabitants were again convoked to decide upon the transfer. This congress was held in the temporary capital, and lasted from the 12th until the 16th of January, 1774: the report of the commissioners was read, and, by a plurality of votes, it was resolved to make a formal translation of the city of Guatimala to the valley of Las Vacas."

Matters were in this state, when the new fiscal of the royal *audiencia*, Don Josŕ Sistué, arrived at Guatimala, and once more agitated the question, whether the plain of *La Virgen* (in Mixco) would not be preferable to the plain of *El Rodeo* (in Las Vacas) for the capital. In consequence of a fresh survey, the former edict was now revoked, and a new decree directed the removal of the city to the plain of *La Virgen*. The royal assent was given to this measure on the 21st of July, 1775, and a decree of the 21st of September following, granted the whole revenue

arising from the customs for the ensuing ten years, towards the expenses of erecting the new city. The *ayuntamiento* were in due form installed in the new situation on the 1st of January, 1776; the university of San Carlos removed thither in November 1777; on the 22d of that month, divine service was performed for the first time in the temporary cathedral; and in succession, the several parishes, convents, and churches were transferred as fast as circumstances would permit, a proclamation having been issued in Old Guatimala on the 29th of July, 1777, commanding the population to remove to the new city, within a year, and totally abandon the remains of the old one.

"Some private individuals," continues Juarros, "many artisans, and a great part of the people, supposing, and, as it seems, not without reason, that the royal pleasure for removing the capital was intended as a matter of favour to the whole community, but not to force them to abandon the dwellings and conveniencies they possessed in Old Guatimala, and seek habitations in the new capital, expected to remain in the quiet enjoyment of their homes. The governors of the kingdom put a very different construction upon the royal edict, and considered the translation of the capital, not as a matter of favour, but as a mandate for the total abandonment of the old city; they were therefore inflexible in forcing the inhabitants to quit the proscribed soil. These, though grieved at resigning all they possessed in their old domicile, were unwilling to have it supposed they would oppose the royal pleasure, and reluctantly quitted their abodes: some repaired to the new city, others retired to the neighbouring villages, so that on the 30th of June, 1779, Old Guatimala, in compliance with

the governor's positive orders, from being the busy haunt of men, was transformed into a dreary solitude.

" The cruel and tyrannical proclamation issued by Don Matias de Galvez, president of the royal audiencia, in the month of June 1779, for the desertion of Old Guatimala, deserves to be made generally known. He commanded that every inhabitant should quit the city within a prescribed (very small) number of days; and that from the date of the proclamation, no artificer should there exercise his trade, without being liable to very severe penalties. Until the publication of this order, it was a thing unheard of in any civilised country, that a man should be prohibited from supporting his family by the honest labour of his hands, at his settled abode. In consequence, many of these poor people were forced to the hard necessity of quitting the place, or of committing robberies to afford sustenance to those dependant upon them; yet, notwithstanding the monstrous severity of the mandate, it was allowed to have its full effect."

Caprice, intrigue, and interested motives, had probably some share in dictating the transfer of the capital, and the arbitrary policy by which it was enforced. The old city, though greatly injured by the earthquake of 1773, " was not so generally dilapidated," says our Historian, " as it appeared to the terrified, or, it may perhaps be said, the interested imaginations of architects, engineers, and notaries. Great damage was certainly done in some quarters, particularly in those on elevated situations, as La Candelaria, San Domingo, Chipilapa, and part of San Sebastian. In the centre of the city, some houses were destroyed, but more remained unhurt, or slightly injured, as they sufficiently shew at this day:

in the lower quarters of San Francisco, Tortuguero, Chajon, and others, the effect upon the buildings was very slight. As to the most sumptuous buildings and public works, viz. the cathedral and other churches, the palaces and convents, it would have been necessary for the most part to pull them down entirely. On the other hand, as it was a well-known fact, that, since the Spaniards first settled in that valley, either at Tzacualpa or Panchoi, fifty years had never elapsed without the city's suffering some injury, it appeared more desirable to remove the capital once more, although at much greater expense, than to rebuild it in the same situation. The latter alternative would have been much easier and less costly, but it would have been labouring upon a calculation of only thirty or forty years' duration of the work."

The inhabitants had not removed from the old city, when a malignant fever broke out, which raged till the month of May 1774, "making a horrible addition to the already lengthened list of mortality. The major part of the inhabitants settled in the new city; but, by a change of soil, they could not evade the penalty of misfortune, suffering, and tribulation, inflicted upon the human race: these followed them to their new *domicile*, where they experienced severe injury and much distress from dreadful storms of rain and hail, in which many persons were killed by lightning. Since the ruin of Old Guatimala, the greatest suffering of the new city was from the small-pox, in 1780, which extended nearly all over the kingdom. This distemper was of so malignant a character, that, in a few days, great numbers fell victims to it. That the infected might not die without the administration of the usual sacraments, the *viaticum* was carried from all the parish churches, and also from those of the

regular religious orders. The defunct were not permitted to be interred in the churches, both on account of the numbers, and because serious injury might be done to the survivors, from the decomposition of bodies in a state of such virulent contagion: three cemeteries without the city were, therefore, consecrated for their sepulture. The zealous devotion of the Ayuntamiento on this melancholy occasion, was honourable in the extreme. Every effort was made to give assistance to the poor. A *regidor* took charge of each quarter of the city; and one was always in attendance at the hospital established out of it, for the reception of the variolous patients. Inoculation was now, for the first time, practised in Guatimala, with the most complete success; for, although so many perished of the contagion, scarcely one of those who were inoculated died."

The proscribed city of Old Guatimala remained for some time in a state of complete desertion. At length, many of its former occupants covertly resumed their old abodes, and it has by degrees again become peopled. In the year 1799, it was invested with the privileges of a town. Juarros states the population at upwards of 8,000 souls, among whom are some Spaniards, but the greater part are natives (*ladinos*).

NEW GUATIMALA.

THE new city received, by royal appointment, the name of *La Nueva Guatimala de la Asuncion*, it being within the curacy of the hermitage of *La Asuncion de Nuestra Señora*. Possibly, the inefficiency of the sainted patrons of the old city, Saint James and Saint Cecilia, might be an inducement to consecrate the new settlement to the Virgin under one of her many forms

of invocation. The spacious plain of *La Virgen*, in which it stands, forming part of the valley of Mixco, is five leagues in diameter. It is in a delightful climate: the inhabitants scarcely know a change of temperature. The plain is watered by several small rivers and lakes, which greatly conduce to its fertility; and although the new city is not surrounded with so many villages as Old Guatimala, yet, the markets are equally well supplied with provisions of every description from the same quarters, and present a choice of vegetables, fruit, flowers, poultry, game, and other articles not often surpassed in any region. "The city forms a square about fifteen *manzanas* each way; it is divided into four quarters, and the quarters into two *barrios* or wards, each superintended by its peculiar alcalde, elected annually from the residents, and exercising his jurisdiction under the control of the judge of the quarter, who is always a minister of the royal audiencia. For the administration of spiritual concerns, the city is divided into three parishes, each extending its whole length from east to west, and embracing a third part of it from north to south; the centre is called the parish of the Sanctuary of the Cathedral; the northern side, St. Sebastian's; and the southern, Los Remedios. The streets, which cross each other at right angles, are twelve yards broad, the greater part of them paved: the houses, although rather low, to mitigate the violence of future earthquakes, are built in a good style, very commodious, and judiciously decorated, nearly all of them enjoying the advantage of kitchen and pleasure gardens, with two, three, and even more reservoirs of water. The great square is a rectangle 150 yards each way, paved all over, and having a colonnade on each side. The eastern side presents the grand en-

trance to the cathedral, with the archiepiscopal palace on the right, and the college de Infantes on the left; on the opposite side stand the royal palace, the hall of the audiencia, and offices belonging to that tribunal, the chamber of accounts, the treasury, and the mint; on the north side are the houses of the corporation, prisons, markets, public granary, &c.; and on the south side, the custom-house, and the marquezado de Aizinena, &c. In the middle there is a large stone fountain of very superior workmanship, supplied with water, brought by means of pipes from the mountains to the south-east, upwards of two leagues distant; from the same source, twelve public reservoirs in different places and streets, besides many belonging to the convents and private houses, derive their supplies. This aqueduct is in some places carried over valleys, upon an extensive range of arches, and in others, through hills, by excavations, that have cost immense labour to complete. From the south-west, there has been another stream of water brought into the city by similar means, and although from a greater distance, it has, from the nature of the country through which it passes, been effected with much less difficulty. The cathedral is small, but in a fine style of architecture, and not yet completed: the pedestals and capitals of the columns, the vaultings of the chapels, and many other parts of it, are executed in a manner that entitles them to the admiration of a scientific observer. Many other churches and convents are still in a progressive state; and, except the Jesuits' college with its dependencies, and eleven of the minor churches, are intended to be similar to those already mentioned in Old Guatimala. But besides those spoken of at the former place, there are, the college of Seises, the female seminary called the Visitation, the Hermitage

del Carmen, situated on the summit of a hill near the city, and that of Our Lady of Guadalupe. On the north-east, adjoining the city, there is an extensive suburb, divided into two quarters and four barrios, over which the two ordinary alcaldes are the presiding magistrates: the parish of La Candelaria, and the college of the Visitation, are in this division, the streets of which are crooked and irregularly built."

The population of the city, according to the census of 1795, amounted to 24,434 persons, including many families descended from the most illustrious houses of Old Spain. Since that period, the number of inhabitants has greatly increased, and is supposed now to exceed 30,000. The Guatimaltecans are characterised by Juarros as, for the most part, docile, humane, courteous, liberal, affable to strangers, and inclined to piety, but too generally chargeable with pusillanimity and indolence. "They possess an aptness for the arts, which is demonstrated by the great number of handicraftsmen in all trades, among whom there have been produced artisans of superior talents; but those who acquire most celebrity are, the silversmiths, sculptors, and musicians. The productions of the sculptors are eagerly sought after, not only in this country, but in Mexico; and even some that have been carried to Europe, have been highly esteemed by connoisseurs. The class of weavers is numerous, and their looms produce fine muslins and gauzes, calicoes, and common cottons that are used in general wear by the poor people of the country. The potters are also a numerous tribe, who furnish earthenware and china sufficient for all the provinces: in the manufacture of some articles they excel so much, as to turn them out of hand but little inferior to the porcelain of Germany. Among the females, there are excellent embroiderers,

mantua-makers, and florists, who make artificial flowers that vie with the productions of nature. Great numbers of females are employed in the manufacture of a species of cigars, called *tuza*, that are peculiar to this country; others spin cotton-yarn of every degree of fineness."

In the year 1795, a society was instituted, under the title of the Royal Economical Society of Friends of the Kingdom, with the sanction of the Government, which, during the short time that it was suffered to exist, reflected high credit on its promoters. It had for its design, to ascertain the most effectual means of encouraging agriculture and the arts, and of advancing the public prosperity of the kingdom. The first object to which the members turned their attention was, the introduction of spinning-wheels; and rewards were offered to females who should produce the best specimens of thread. With the view to encourage the cultivation of cocoa and cotton to a greater extent, premiums were next offered to the persons who should plant the greatest number of trees. To excite emulation among the weavers, prizes were assigned to those who presented the finest gauzes and muslins. To facilitate the progress of the arts, a school of drawing was opened in March 1797, in which thirty-two young men were gratuitously instructed for two hours (from seven till nine) every evening, and prizes were awarded once a month for the two best drawings. A mathematical school was opened in January 1798; and in January 1800, a model academy was opened. The society held a public sitting every half-year, at which the most distinguished personages of the capital attended. At these meetings, extracts were read from the journal of the Society's proceedings, the prizes were distributed to the successful candidates, and the

sitting terminated with a discourse delivered by one of the associates. "The patriotic zeal of this body obtained for it a fresh mark of the royal favour by his majesty's communicating to it, on the 15th of July, 1799, his entire satisfaction at the operations which had so powerfully contributed to the public advantage; and he desired that the royal *audiencia* should propose to him such measures as they might think expedient to ensure its continuance. With these flattering prospects of success, on the 14th of July, 1800, contrary to all expectation, and to the astonishment of every person, a royal order was received, by which its further meetings and ulterior progress were prohibited, without vouchsafing any reasons for a determination so extraordinary and apparently injurious." This flagrant act of despotic authority illustrates in a striking manner, the odious policy pursued by the Spanish Government towards the Colonies; nor does it leave any room for surprise, that the Guatimaltecans, not less than the Mexican citizens, should have been impatient of a yoke so galling.

From the foundation of the university to the year 1778, the lectures were delivered according to the old scholastic method. In that year, the first course of experimental philosophy was begun. In October 1792, examinations in geometry took place for the first time, which were repeated in May 1795. In 1789, 1790, and 1794, there were examinations in anatomy, for which purpose models were introduced, which are still preserved. "In March 1798, four young men were examined in surgery, being the first who had graduated in that faculty; and in July 1799, there were examinations in philosophy according to the Socratic method." * Attached to the university are twelve

* Juarros, pp. 138—144.

professorships and a public library. In 1793, was instituted, by royal permission, the *Protomedicato*, or college of physicians, composed of a president, two examiners, and a fiscal. The Economical Society, before its arbitrary suppression, laid the basis of a royal cabinet of natural history. Besides these institutions, Juarros enumerates three schools for the gratuitous instruction of youth in the elementary branches of knowledge, and two classes of Latin grammar. It remains for future travellers to tell us, what further progress science and literature have made in the capital during the last five and twenty years, and what, besides changing its form of government, the Revolution has effected for Guatimala.

Among the other chief places in the *alcaldia-mayor* of Sacatepec, we have already mentioned *Almolonga*, for some time the residence of the *alcalde-mayor*, and one of the most beautiful villages of the kingdom. It contains a splendid parochial church, with an image of the Virgin that is held in high repute, and a Franciscan convent. The Indian inhabitants claim the privileges of nobility, as being descended from the Mexicans who accompanied Alvarado at the conquest. Their principal employment is supplying the capital with fruit, which they procure from the more distant villages. The climate is cold. *San Juan Sacatepec* was also for some time the head town of the *alcaldia*; it is now the most populous village in the province, containing upwards of 6,000 inhabitants, and is described as a very handsome place. The air is salubrious, the climate temperate, the soil extremely fertile, and the market well supplied; the inhabitants are chiefly employed in agriculture and sugar manufactories. *San Juan Amatitan*, situated in the vicinity

of the lake of that name, is a favourite watering-place with the citizens of Guatimala. It is situated in a plain surrounded by very high mountains, which give it, Juarros says, a somewhat melancholy aspect; but, being in the vicinity of the lake Amatitan, and having a beautiful river flowing on the eastern side of it, the fine climate and its contiguity to the capital, occasion it to be very much frequented for the purpose of drinking the waters of the river, which is a specific in many cases; others retire thither to take the baths, and others again for their recreation. The streets are broad and straight, and the houses are commodious. The church contains a famous effigy of the infant Saviour, which was originally placed in a little hermitage at Belen, a village three leagues distant; but the archbishop, to prevent the mischiefs occasioned by large meetings in retired places, ordered it, in 1789, to be transferred to the church of San Juan, whither a vast concourse of worshippers annually repair on the first Sunday in May. The inhabitants employ themselves in fishing for moharra, crabs, and cray-fish in the lake, which they dispose of in Guatimala; in raising melons and water-melons for the same market; and in the manufacture of baskets and mats. The inhabitants of *Villa Nueva de San Miguel* in like manner subsist by fishing on the lake, and raising bananas for the capital. *Villa Nueva de Petapa* is a well-built village, situated in a delightful plain, four leagues from the metropolis. There are some very good houses, a handsome church, and an oratory; the streets intersect each other at right angles, and there is a spacious *plaza*. The inhabitants cultivate maize. *San Christoval de Amatitan*, about three leagues from *San Juan Amatitan*, is celebrated for a species of lizard found there, which is believed to be a cure for cancers; the Indians are

said to have used this medicine from the earliest periods. *San Domingo Mixco*, situated on the declivity of a mountain, and commanding a view over the extensive valley of Mixco, is famed for its mineral spring; the inhabitants are carriers and potters, and cultivate maize. *Santa Catalina Pinula* stands at the foot of the ridge of mountains called *Canales*, two leagues S.E. of Guatimala. In this place is a seminary for the education of young females,—an establishment not to be found in any other village. The institution has obtained the royal sanction: the individuals on the establishment maintain themselves by the produce of their gardens and their bee-hives. At *Nuestra Señora de la Asuncion Jocotenango*, a village contiguous to Old Guatimala, is held an annual fair for horses, mules, and merchandise, which is numerously attended. *La Ermita de la Asuncion*, the mother-church of that which was subsequently built in the plain of *La Virgen*, is a small place situated in the valley of *Las Vacas*, on the river of the same name. *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*, is a modern village, built for the gardeners who supply the market of the capital: the church was consecrated so lately as 1803.

In the *alcaldia-mayor* of Chimaltenango, which extends about twenty leagues in length and as many in breadth, the principal places are: *Santa Ana Chimaltenango*, the head town, about eleven leagues from the metropolis; the public square is very handsome, having on one side an extensive sheet of water. *Tecpanguatemala*,* formerly a residence of the Kachiquel monarchs. Here was built the second church in the kingdom. The climate is still colder than that at

* That is, *above* Guatimala, or, Upper Guatimala; for such is said to be the meaning of *tecpan*. So, Tecpanatillan was a distinct place from Atitlan.

Santa Ana, and is favourable to the growth of wheat, maize, peaches, quinces, apples, pears, &c.; the neighbourhood abounds also with timber, which is sent to Guatimala in planks. The inhabitants, who exceed 3,000, have a high character for industry and other estimable qualities. *Patzum* contains 5,000 inhabitants of the Kachiquel nation, who are very industriously occupied in similar pursuits; and the climate is much the same as at Tecpanguatemala. *Patzizia* is a large village, containing not fewer than 5,000 inhabitants, all labourers; the climate is cold and humid. *San Andres Itzapa* contains about 1,500 persons, who raise wheat, maize, pulse, and vegetables, and feed large herds of hogs; the climate is cold, but dry. Here is held a large annual fair on the eve of Saint Andrew, the patron saint. *San Sebastian del Texar* is placed by Juarros in the *alcaldia* of Sacatepec, although within the valley of Chimaltenango: it is remarkable only for a medicinal spring. *San Martin Xilopetec* stands in the mildest climate of the valley, where the sugar-cane is cultivated with success, affording full employment to several manufactories; the population is considerable. *San Antonio Nexapa*, *San Juan Alotenango*, and *San Miguel Milpa Dueñas*, are also heads of curacies within this province.

That which first claims the traveller's notice among the natural curiosities of the valley of Guatimala, is the gigantic *Volcan de Agua* (water-volcano), which is thus described by Juarros. "This mountain is of a conical figure; its base extends over nearly all the western part of the valley of Guatimala. On the side towards the city, the ascent by the road from the base to the summit, is three leagues and a half; and from the side towards Alotenango, it is more than four leagues. The circumference at the bottom is eighteen

leagues. Cultivation is confined to the lower parts of the mountain; the middle region is covered with thick forests; and during great part of the summer, the city is supplied with snow from the upper region. On its skirts are numerous mineral and medicinal springs, and many Indian villages, besides a great number of detached houses and farms. On the summit is a concave space, resembling a crater, measuring about 140 yards by 120. From the edge of this crater, a most beautiful prospect presents itself in every direction;—Old Guatimala, with its fertile fields and numerous farms, the village and lake of Amatitan, with all the surrounding country, can be distinctly seen. Looking westward, the provinces of Suchiltepec and Soconusco, and even the plains of Chiapa may be discovered; to the eastward, the provinces of Zonzonate, Santana Grande, and San Salvador, with the lake of Gilopango, may be distinguished; on the north and south, the view is bounded by the two oceans." The mountain, seen from the plains, has a magnificent appearance in every direction: its conical figure, the great variety of colour on its surface, the various cultivation and gardens which adorn the base, its belt of forests, and its snowy summit,* give it a highly picturesque as well as majestic character. Although there can be little doubt of its being an extinct volcano, there exists no tradition of its having ever emitted fire. The eruption of 1541 consisted merely

* In another part of his work, Juarros describes this mountain as covered *to the summit* with trees that always retain their verdure; yet, it is stated above, that it supplies the city during great part of the summer with snow. He affirms, moreover, that it is the most lofty in the kingdom. The fact we apprehend to be, that it loses its snow at certain seasons of the year; and if so, its elevation does not reach the region of perpetual snow.

of an immense torrent of water, carrying with it immense stones, and, if Father Remesal may be believed, the crown of the mountain itself.* Humboldt supposes that subterraneous water had no small share in producing the stupendous phenomenon of Jorullo, but that volcano emitted flames and discharged lava.

Old Guatimala is to the northward of this mountain, which stands between two volcanoes, the *Volcan de Pacaya* on the east, and the *Volcan de Fuego* on the west. From each of these, there have been violent eruptions from time immemorial. The most remarkable on record were, that of July 11, 1775, from Pacaya, and those of the years 1623, 1705, 1710, and 1717, from the *Volcan de Fuego*. There happened one as recently as the close of the eighteenth century, but, as it was unattended with any serious consequences, it excited little attention, although it lasted several days. The waters of a spring on the side of Alotenango were observed to have become heated, during the eruption, to such a degree, that cattle were unable to pass through the rivulet running from it. The *Volcan de Fuego* is included in the *alcaldia* of Chimaltenango. At its base, near the village of San Andres, there is a thermal spring, the water of which is very hot, and is held in great repute for its medicinal virtues: it is called Saint Andrew's Bath. At a short distance is another warm spring, that emits a strong sulphureous smell, and is deemed an efficacious remedy for cutaneous complaints. The general figure of this mountain is conical, but its summit is divided into three points, in the westernmost of which may be seen several openings, which frequently emit flames,

* Probably, an accumulation of snow on the summit, which might add to the apparent height of the mountain.

pumice-stones, sand, and smoke. The *Volcan de Pacaya* stands to the eastward of Old Guatimala, but southward of the present capital, and three leagues from Amatitan. This mountain also has three distinct peaks. It is connected with a chain of elevations extending to a great distance. The surrounding country is thickly covered with the accumulation of volcanic matter that has been formed by its numerous eruptions. Fuentes says, that, in his time, there was scarcely a day throughout the year, in which one or other of its lofty peaks did not emit flames. In the year 1664, " such immense quantities of flames were vomited forth with the most appalling explosions, that, during the night, the city of Old Guatimala, at the distance of seven leagues, was illuminated by a light not inferior to that of mid-day; and the terror produced by the vibrations of the earth was so great, that the inhabitants were afraid to trust themselves within their houses during the three days of its continuance. Similar events occurred in 1668, 1671, and 1677; but there are no records of any others after the time of Fuentes, until that which took place on the 11th of July, 1775, when, at day-break, without any previous noise, or any perceptible oscillation of the earth, a dense cloud of smoke was observed from Old Guatimala * in a south-west direction, which rose from behind the range of mountains that concealed the volcano from the view. To discover the flames, it was necessary to go to the village of *Santa Maria de Jesus*, whence could be distinguished the aperture through which they burst. From this arose a large column of thick smoke, and vast quantities of burning

* Where the writer, Don Domingo Juarres, was resident at the time.

stones that fell again into the crater. Sand was also thrown out in such abundance, that, being carried by the wind, it fell so copiously in Old Guatimala as to obscure the light of the sun, and thickly cover the ground. The wind having changed, the sand was carried in a southerly direction as far as the provinces of Escuintla and Suchiltepec. It was remarked on this occasion, that the eruption was not from either of the summits, but from the region where the mountain divides into three peaks."

The lake of Amatitan will claim the attention of the scientific traveller. Its shores are said to produce salt, like those of the lake of Tezcuco,* in which the inhabitants carry on a considerable trade; there are also several warm springs on its borders, which are found very beneficial in the case of glandular swellings in the throat, to which the females of this country are subject. In all probability, the waters of the lake will be found impregnated with the muriate and carbonate of soda, as well as some kind of sulphate. It is about three leagues in length, and one in breadth at its widest part; its depth is not specified. It furnishes an inexhaustible supply of fish, but there are none of the larger kinds: they consist of the *moharra*, a fish about a foot in length, and of excellent flavour; the *pepesca*, which does not exceed three inches in length, but is reckoned a delicacy; crabs and crayfish; and a species called *pescaditos*.

The valley of *Las Vacas* † is watered, on its eastern

* See vol. i. pp. 266, 315.

† This valley received its name (the Cows) from being the place where cattle were first introduced into the kingdom by one of the companions of Alvarado, from the island of Cuba. They multiplied here so fast, that they were soon dispersed over all parts of the country.

side, by the river Chorrera, which deserves notice on account of the supposed petrifying quality of its waters. "If the root or branch of a tree fall so that a part of it lies in the water, the portion which is immersed, becomes petrified into a substance of a shining white or grey colour, but the other part remains in its natural state; and it is observed, that where the current is rapid, the transformation is more speedily effected than in places where the stream is slow." The explanation of this phenomenon is not very difficult. The waters are highly impregnated with calcareous matter, which, when the stream is slow, is precipitated, but is held in solution where the current is rapid, and forms a deposite on whatever obstructs the course of the stream. Juarros adds, that "the substance thus transformed always preserves its natural porosity and fibrous texture." This can hardly be true with regard to the part covered with the incrustation; but it is sufficiently evident, that the waters have, properly speaking, no petrifying quality.*

In the valley of Petapa, some human bones of gigantic size are said to have been discovered, and among them, Fuentes says, "a tooth as large as a man's two fists!" Possibly, some fossil animal remains may be found here. In the valley of Sacatepec, near the village of San Pedro, "a mine of rubies (and silver) was accidentally discovered in the year 1681," by the curate of the village. The account given of the circumstance by the above-mentioned Historian, is as follows: "As the father was amusing himself one afternoon, he directed his walk towards a pass in the mountain, through which ran a clear rivulet. On

* See, for an account of the petrescent waters of Laara and the petrified beach of Selinty, Mod. Trav. *Syria, &c.* vol. ii. pp. 251, 253, 260.

the side of the bed of this river, he observed a vein of white clay, interspersed with red and black patches. Being attracted by the variety and brilliance of the colours, and the reflection of small sparkling substances, he took up a part of the clay, which he carried to Guatimala, and gave to the licentiate, Christoval Martin, an intelligent man, conversant in the nature of metals; who, having fused the mass, which weighed three pounds, delivered to the curate, on his return, a piece of pure silver rather more than half an *ochava* (about forty grains) in weight, and seven rubies of the size of small beans. A few days after the discovery, the curate was elected prior of the Dominican convent of Guatimala, which obliged him to quit his curacy; and no more was heard of the mine." Fuentes states, that he had actually had the silver and the gems in his hands. Juarros repeats the story without comment, so that, up to the close of the last century, no attention appears to have been paid to the discovery, although there is strong reason to believe that the calcareous formation which evidently prevails in this part, will be found richly argentiferous.

Don D. Juarros gives, from the same Historian, an account of a very remarkable cavern, called the cavern of Mixco, in the valley of Xilopetec, near where the ancient village of Mixco stood. "On a small ridge of land on one side of the ruins of ancient Mixco, is the entrance to the cavern, about three yards each way. The portico, formed of clay, is in some parts entire, and appears to be of the Doric order. Fuentes says, he inquired of some old Indians, how it had been contrived to give so great a consistency to the clay; and they informed him, it was done by grinding a quantity of onion-seed, and mixing it in the water

with which the clay was tempered. From the entrance, a flight of thirty-six stone steps, each of a single piece, descends to a lofty saloon about sixty yards square. From this chamber the descent continues by another flight, beyond which nothing more is known, as no person sufficiently courageous, or imprudent enough to resist the indications of imminent danger from the tremulous motion of the ground under foot, has yet advanced more than a few paces. Descending eighteen steps of this second flight, there is, on the right hand, another doorway, forming a perfect arch; and having passed this, there are six steps, in all respects similar to the former, from which there is a passage about 140 feet in length. Further than this part, it has not been explored. Many extraordinary accounts of it have been fabricated, but they are such as will not bear repeating."

In this same district (Xilopetec), are other excavations not less deserving of attention. "The river Pancacoya, which rises near the pass of Pasacab, descends with great rapidity from a lofty rock, but, before it reaches the plain, it passes through a conduit formed in the rock, about a yard and a half wide, and sufficiently high for a man to pass through with ease. Where this channel terminates, there is a range of columns curiously wrought, with capitals and mouldings; and a little further on, are several round cisterns formed in the rock, about a yard and a half in diameter, and nearly a yard in depth." There is a tradition, that this part of the river was a washing place for gold; and it is supposed, Juarros says, that the cisterns were excavated for that purpose. This is highly improbable. All these excavations are doubtless to be referred to the same period and the

same artists, and class with Montezuma's Bath at Tescosingo,* the *Casas de Piedras* at Palenque,† and the Palace of Mitla in Oaxaca;‡ not, perhaps, as monuments of the same people or era, but as indicating a striking analogy in the respective customs and attainments in civilisation of the Aztec, Zapotec, and Kachiquel nations, and possibly a common origin.

We must not omit to notice one still more marvellous curiosity which is found in these regions,—an animal which becomes transformed into a vegetable! Such is the grave statement of the Historian so frequently referred to. Near the villages of San Christoval, Amatitan, and Pampichin, he tells us, is found the green *chapuli*, a large species of grasshopper, or locust, about a span long; at the extremity of its tail is a sharp curved point like a thorn, which becomes hard when the animal has attained its full growth. "If killed in this state, and carefully opened, a small bunch of seeds, similar to those of the passion-flower, about an inch long, attached to ramifying fibres, is found in the intestines: these grains being sown, will produce a plant like the gourd, which will bear a fruit resembling small pompions, as yellow and brilliant as gold; the seeds of which, sown again, will bring forth similar fruit, but of much larger size." Were these seeds to bring forth grasshoppers, it might be accounted for. It may, indeed, occur to the reader, that the *chapuli* must first have swallowed these seeds; but Francisco de Fuentes assures us, on the unimpeachable testimony of Tomas de Melgar, a venerable priest, and Don Domingo Juarros is satisfied of its correctness, that this vegetable spawn

* See vol. i. p. 333. † See p. 157 of the present volume.
‡ See p. 130.

is actually produced from the intestines of the insect; and the said priest, having sown the seeds, found the result to accord precisely with the above statement. We commend the *chapuli* to the especial attention of the learned naturalists of Europe.

To the west of the *alcaldia-mayor* of Chimaltenango, between Suchiltepec and Escuintla on the south, and Totonicapan and Vera Paz on the north, lies the province of

SOLOLA.

This *alcaldia* was formed by the union of the two separate *corregimientos* of Atitan and Tecpanatitlan, or Sololá, which are still considered as distinct districts. It is of small extent, but populous; lying between lat. 14° 25′ and 15° 10′ N., and long. 92° 46′ and 93° 46′ W.; the population amounts to 43,000 souls. The district of Sololá, which includes the eastern part of the province, was included in the ancient kingdom of Kachiquel. *Nuestra Señora de la Asuncion de Solola*, the head town, was the ancient Tecpanatitlan, the residence of one of the royal house of the Kachiquels. It is situated on the summit of an elevated ridge, in a cold climate, about twenty-eight leagues from Guatimala. The inhabitants, who amount to upwards of 5,000, are Indians, chiefly artisans and mechanics.

Santa Cruz del Quiché, in this district, is the modern representative of the once large and opulent capital of the sovereigns of Quiché, the city of Utatlan. It is situated on an extensive and very fertile plain, is moderately populous, and contains a Dominican priory. Such is all the information which Juarros is able to communicate respecting the modern village; but

"that indefatigable writer, Francisco de Fuentes, who went to Quiché for the purpose of collecting information, partly from the antiquities of the place, and partly from manuscripts," gives the following description of the ancient city. It stood nearly in the situation which Santa Cruz now occupies, and the latter is supposed to have been originally a suburb. The city was surrounded by a deep ravine, which formed a natural fosse, leaving only two very narrow roads as entrances, which were defended by the castle. The centre of the city was occupied by the royal palace, which was surrounded by the houses of the nobility, the extremities being inhabited by the plebeians. The streets were very narrow. The *alcazar*, or palace, in the opinion of Torquemada, could compete in magnificence with that of Montezuma at Mexico, or that of the Incas at Cuzco. It was constructed of hewn stone of various colours. The front extended 376 paces from east to west, and it was 728 paces in depth. There were six principal divisions. The first contained lodgings for a numerous troop of lancers, archers, and other troops, constituting the royal body guard; the second was assigned to the princes and relations of the king; the third, to the monarch himself; the fourth and fifth were occupied by the queens and royal concubines; and the sixth was the residence of the king's daughters and other females of the blood royal. The third division, appropriated to the use of the king, contained distinct suites of apartments for the morning, the evening, and night. In one of the saloons stood the throne, under four canopies of feathers.* In this part of the

* The Indians are said to have distinguished the degrees of sovereignty among their chiefs by the throne itself. That of Utatlan, which was the first in rank, was placed under four cano-

palace were the treasury, the tribunals of justice, and the armory, together with gardens, aviaries, and menageries. The female apartments were of great extent; and attached to them were gardens, baths, and places for breeding geese,* which were kept for the sole purpose of furnishing feathers for ornamental furniture. The castle of the *Atalaya* (watch-tower) was a remarkable structure, four stories in height. That of *Resguardo* (defence — probably the citadel is meant) was five stories high: it extended 188 paces in front, and was 230 feet in depth. From this description, these castles would seem to have resembled the Mexican *teocallies*, and the stories were possibly terraces. It is impossible to gather from this vague account, what remains yet exist of the "palaces, castles, and temples," of this Indian metropolis. Utatlan, Juarros says, was indisputably the most magnificent and opulent city, not only of Quiché, but of the whole kingdom of Guatimala. As such, its site would especially deserve to be examined by future travellers. Of the Indians of this district, some speak the Quiché, and some the Kachiquel dialect.

pies, formed of feathers, each of different colours and of different sizes, fixed one within the other. The throne of Kachiquel, or Guatimala, had three canopies; and that of Atitlan, or Zutugil, had but two. — JUARROS, p. 164.

* This is obviously a mistake, chargeable, we suspect, not on the historian, but his translator. Humboldt says, "The goose is the only one of the birds of our poultry-yards which is no where to be found in the Spanish colonies of the New Continent."—(*Pol. Essay*, vol. iii. p. 56.) The turkey, called in Mexico, *totolin* and *huexoloti*, is probably meant. Cortes relates, that several thousands of these birds were fed in the poultry-yards of the castles of Montezuma. They were formerly found wild on the ridge of the cordilleras from Panama to New England. The ancient Mexicans had also tame ducks, which they annually plucked, as the feathers were an important article of commerce.

The capital of the Zutugil kingdom was Atitlan, "otherwise called *Atziquinixai*, which, in the Quiché dialect, means the eagle's house; a name originating in the practice of their kings, who, when they took the field, wore, as a distinguishing device, a large plume of the quetzal's feathers in the form of an eagle." This extensive city, Juarros says, was in a position strongly defended by natural bulwarks, among steep, hanging rocks, on the border of the lake of the same name, which protected it on the south side. Its site is occupied by the village of *Santiago Atitan* (corrupted or softened, apparently, from Atitlan), the chief place in the district of the same name, which comprises the western part of the province of Solola. It stands on the south side of the lake, in a mild and healthy climate, 28 leagues W. of Guatimala, and contains upwards of 2,000 Indian inhabitants. The village was anciently a mission of the Franciscans, and one of the earliest founded in the province: the convent was rebuilt about the middle of the last century. Atitlan is shorn, however, of all its ancient splendour. If there are any remains of the Indian capital, Juarros does not mention them.

The lake of Atitan is one of the largest in Guatimala, being eight leagues in length from east to west, and more than four leagues from north to south. It is entirely surrounded by mountains and rocks of irregular form. "From its margin there is no gradation of depth, but the banks are precipitous, and the bottom has not been found with a line of 300 fathoms. Several rivers discharge themselves into it, and it receives all the waters that descend from the mountains; but there is no perceptible channel by which this great influx is carried off. The water is fresh, and so cold, that in a few minutes it benumbs and

swells the limbs of those who attempt to swim in it. The only fish caught in it are crabs, and a species of small fish about the size of the little finger (*pepescas?*). These are in such countless myriads, that the inhabitants of all the ten surrounding villages carry on a considerable fishery for them. The communication between one village and another is carried on by canoes." According to this account, (which will require, however, to be verified,) this lake would seem to be one of the most remarkable phenomena in the country. In the absence of all specific information with regard to its elevation and other circumstances, it would be idle to frame a conjecture as to its origin, or the probable communication of its waters with some other reservoir. The fish which it contains, are the same as are found in the lake Amatitan. May there not be some connexion between these lakes, at least the fathomless one, and the *Volcan de Agua?* Near the village of Atitan is a mineral spring of "sour water," which "exudes in the form of dew from the rock, and trickles into a channel, forming a stream sufficient to fill small vessels. On account of its medicinal virtues, it is in great request, and is sent to distant parts: it is an excellent remedy for nephritic complaints, and cures the swellings in the throat, so common in this kingdom, where the complaint is called *bosio*, and more vulgarly *guëguëcho*. The water has a flavour resembling lemon, but it leaves no taste in the mouth." A chemical analysis is a process which has never yet been achieved in the kingdom of Guatimala.

The climate of this district is for the most part mild; the soil fertile, producing cocoa, maize, pulse, all sorts of culinary vegetables, *aguacates* of extraordinary excellence, and a variety of other fruits, aniseed,

drugs, and cochineal. In these articles, aided by the labours of cabinet-makers, carpenters, and potters, the inhabitants carry on a tolerably lucrative commerce with the adjoining provinces and the metropolis. The natives speak the Zutugil and Kachiquel languages. Half of the curacies in this district belong to the Franciscans, whereas, in the district of Solola, the Dominicans are the chief proprietors.

Of the five middle provinces, two still remain to be described; they are named, from their chief towns,

QUEZALTENANGO AND TOTONICAPAN.

THE ancient kingdom of Quiché extended over great part of both these provinces, and the Quiché is still the prevailing dialect. Next to Utatlan, the most considerable city in that kingdom was Xelahuh, which occupied the site of the modern town of *Quezaltenango del Espiritu Santo.* This was the first place founded by Alvarado after his conquest of the Quiché Indians. "It is beyond doubt," says Juarros, "the most important, rich, and flourishing village of the kingdom, surpassing in several respects many of the towns and cities. The population is great, viz. (in 1778) 464 Spaniards, 5,536 Ladinos,* and 5,000 Indians. The Ladinos rear large flocks of sheep, and cultivate extensive tracts of lands for wheat. There are numerous artisans in all branches, and thirty manufactories of fine linen cloths of various colours, serges, and coarse cloth of different kinds, in which 190 workmen are employed, besides several looms for the manufactory of cotton goods. The *corregidor* of

* *Ladinos* is a Spanish word signifying intelligent, or sagacious: it is the general appellation given in Guatimala to the Indians who profess Christianity, to distinguish them from the other natives.

the province has his residence here. There is a post-office, a *depôt* of tobacco, others of gunpowder, saltpetre, and playing-cards, (all royal monopolies,) a custom-house, a deputy-commissioner of lands, and a vice-consulate. There is a Franciscan convent under the authority of a guardian. The principal church is capacious, rich, and well furnished, in which the chapel of *Nuestra Señora del Rosario* is very curious as well as in good taste: there are also five other churches. The market is better supplied than any other, excepting only that of Guatimala; the annual sales average 18,000 bushels of wheat, 14,000 dollars worth of cocoa, 50,000 of panelas,* 12,000 of sugar, 30,000 of woollen cloths, and 5,000 of cotton cloth, and provisions of all kinds in proportion." This estimate was made between forty and fifty years ago, at which time the whole population of the province amounted to about 34,000. In 1823, it is computed to have risen to nearly 44,000. That of the head-town may, therefore, be supposed to have increased in something like the same proportion. The other chief places in this *corregimiento* are; *El Barrio de San Marcos Sacatepec*, a small village of Spaniards and *Ladinos*, who breed cattle, cultivate wheat and maize, and manufacture some woollens and linens,—population between 2 and 3,000; *Santa Catalina Suñil*, population 3,000; *San Juan Obstuncalco*, with 1,300 inhabitants; *Tajamulco*, a small village, situated at the base of a volcano of that name, which is subject to frequent eruptions,—this place affords a copious supply of excellent sulphur, as it did to the soldiers of Alvarado; *Olintepec; Tacana; San Martin; San*

* Small loaves of unrefined sugar, much used by the natives in making rum, or *chica*.

Pedro Sacatepec; and *Santa Cruz Comitan*. The languages in use are, the Spanish, the Quiché, and the Mam.

This province (corregimiento), which lies between the 15th and 16th parallels of north latitude, and between 93° 26′ and 94° 36′ of west longitude, is thirty-five leagues in length from S.E. to N.W., and about twenty leagues in breadth from N.E. to S.W., forming the figure of a spheroid. It is bounded by Solola on the south-east; Suchiltepec on the south; Soconusco on the west; and Totonicapan on the north-west, north, and north-east. The temperature is cold, and admits of the cultivation of wheat, maize, potatoes, peaches, apples, quinces, cherries, &c. The natives also tend sheep, which are the best branch of their trade.

The *alcaldia-mayor* of Totonicapan, the most western of the interior provinces, lying between lat. 15° 12′ and 17° 20′ N., and long. 92° 16′ and 93° 26′ W., is bounded by Quezaltenango and Solola on the south; Vera Paz on the north-east; and Chiapa on the north and west. Its greatest length is sixty-six leagues; its breadth fifty. The population, in 1778, consisted of 2,750 *Ladinos*, and 55,450 Indians dwelling in fifty villages. In 1823, the total number of inhabitants was 90,000. The province is divided into the two districts of Totonicapan and Gueguetenango. The former extends over the eastern part, which is high table-land, enjoying much the same climate, and yielding the same productions as the other districts of the ancient kingdom of Quiché, of which it formed part. *San Miguel Totonicapan*, the residence of the *alcalde-mayor*, is five leagues from Quezaltenango, eleven from Solola, and thirty-eight from Guatimala. Of the inhabitants, in 1778, 450 were *Ladinos*, 578

cacique Indians, descended from the Tlascaltecs who accompanied Alvarado, and nearly 6,000 *Maseguales*, or plebeian Indians. The Franciscans have a convent here. The natives are expert in the manufacture of guitars, fancy-boxes, and other articles of cabinet-work and earthen-ware. They have, besides, some woollen manufactories. The climate is cold and humid. Near this town there are two warm mineral springs.* *San Luis Sahcaja*, situated within the district of Totonicapan, only two leagues from Quezaltenango, is the site of the first establishment made by Pedro de Alvarado, and its church is the first that was consecrated to Christian worship in this country. It originally bore the name of Quezaltenango, which signifies "the mountain of Quezales;" but, on the transfer of its population, four years after the foundation of the town, to Xelahuh, that name became appropriated to the latter place. The present hamlet of Sahcaja was built in 1780, the date of another small hamlet of *Ladinos*, named *San Carlos Sija*, situated under a very cold climate. The other chief places are, *San Francisco el Alto*, *Momostenango*, and *Santa Maria Chiquimula*, each of which contains a population of from 5 to 6,000 souls; *San Christoval Totonicapan*, 3,500 inhabitants; and *San Andres Xecul*, about 1,200.

The district of Gueguetenango, which forms the western part of the province, lies on the declivity of the cordillera, and has consequently a great variety of climate. In the upper parts wheat is grown, and

* The ancient name of the town is said to have been *Chemequena*, signifying "upon warm water." The waters, Juarros says, are strongly impregnated with sulphur, and are so hot, that eggs, fruit, or even flesh put into it will be perfectly boiled in a short time. In the rivulet which flows from it, the weavers cleanse from grease the wool for their looms.

sheep are pastured: in the lower cantons, are sugar plantations, and Chili pepper is raised. *Concepcion Gueguetenango*, the chief place, (and formerly the head of the *alcaldia*,) enjoys a mild and benignant climate, and yields excellent fruit; it is, however, a very inconsiderable place, the population having declined. At one league's distance is *Chiantla*, famed for its sanctuary of the Virgin of Candelaria, a favourite idol in these parts. Grapes, oranges, figs, and pears are grown in its gardens, but the chief article of commerce is lead, obtained from a rich mine that also yields some silver and litharge. The vernacular dialect here is the Mam. The population is under 1,000. *San Domingo de Sacapulas*, situated on the banks of the river from which it takes its name, is in a hot and dry climate. On the banks of this river the natives collect salt, which is deposited by the waters. The town is inhabited by about 2,000 Quiché Indians. Springs of salt water are found at the village of *San Matco Istatlan* (or *Ixtatan*), a name signifying "the land of salt." "At the foot of a large mountain, are several caverns, penetrating about two yards in the rock: from the roof of these, the water continually exudes. If a vessel be filled with it, and placed over a slow fire at night, it will be found in the morning crystallised into a fine salt, without any further process. The Indians are very economical in the distribution of this water; the caverns are locked up, and the keys are kept by the magistrate. They are opened only on Thursdays at a fixed hour, when the people assemble, and each person receives a pitcher-full; the magistrates and ecclesiastics are entitled to double portions. A considerable traffic is carried on in this article, which they sell in the adjacent provinces, deriving from it sufficient emolument to enable them to

live very comfortably." This village stands in a ravine, at a short distance from the river Lacandon: the climate is very cold. On the borders of Totonicapan stands the small village of *San Francisco Motocinta*, "no otherwise deserving of notice, than for the phenomenon of the river near it, the water of which is of a poisonous quality, and so active, that animals drinking of it die almost immediately. When cattle are obliged to pass the river, the owners take the precaution of muzzling them, to prevent the certain mortality that would be the consequence of their being suffered to allay their thirst." * The Indians of this village weave mats of a scarlet colour, that are much used in the country.

This province is watered by several rivers. Juarros enumerates the Zamala, the Sija, the Motocinta, the Sacapulas, the Zumacinta, the San Ramon, and the Cuilco. Most of these fall into the Southern Ocean; but the Zumacinta (or Sumasinta) discharges itself into the Atlantic. The Zamala (or Samala) is the same river that first bears the name of the Siguila, flowing near the village of *San Miguel Siguila*, and afterwards, at Olintepec, assumes that of Xiquigil, or river of blood, in commemoration of the numbers of Quiché Indians who fell there in disputing the passage with Alvarado. Continuing its course by Quezaltenango, it receives the river Sija, and passes by Sunil; it then enters the province of Suchiltepec, where it is called the Samala, and finally falls into the Pacific. There are several mountain-streams, which, falling from lofty rocky eminences, form cascades of exquisite beauty: for instance, the fall of the river

* Can this deleterious property arise from its traversing mines of lead ore?

San Christoval de Paula, another on the road to the *Ranchos Altos* of Totonicapan, and those at the village of *Guistla de los Xiotes*.

But the most remarkable phenomena in this part of the country are, the intermittent rivers. Herrera, the historian, mentions a spring in the province of Chiapa, which regularly flows during three years, and is then dry for a similar period, and thus alternately. This spring is said to be situated on the side of a mountain, about half a league from Cuidad Real. The rivulet is called *Yeixhihuiat*, a Mexican word signifying "three-years'-water." "At the expiration of the term of three years, the fountain dries up, and the waters burst forth at a place five leagues distant, near Teopisca. The natives of that village give this periodical spring the name of Ohxavilha, which, in the Tzendal language, means the same as the Mexican name. After this spring has flowed for three years, it disappears, and the water rises again at the former place." Such is the information obtained by Juarros from a resident in confirmation of Herrera's statement. Fuentes, he adds, gives another instance of a similar fountain near Chiantla, which flows and is dry for three years together alternately, with this additional peculiarity, that the waters appear and disappear invariably on the eve of St. Michael. "This writer declares, that he had in his possession documents written by Diego de Rivas, other monks of the order of *La Merced*, and several curates of unimpeachable character, attesting the fact. With a view to ascertain the correctness of this account, and whether the phenomenon yet existed, the present writer obtained the favour of a reference on the subject to a clergyman resident in the province, who, in reply, declared, that he had examined several old men of the village, all of whom

assured him, with very little discrepancy in their narratives, that, in a hollow between two mountains, about three leagues from Chiantla, there is a rivulet which begins to flow on Michaelmas-day, and continues for three years, at the end of which it stops on the same day, and remains dry for three years; and on this account the place is called San Miguel." Who can resist the conviction, that the Saint himself is the worker of this triennial miracle? Fuentes mentions another rivulet, in a meadow to the northward of Chiantla, called *Higuero*, the waters of which begin to flow twenty days before the periodical rains cease, and become completely dry twenty days before the rains begin. He states also, that during the period that he was corregidor of Totonicapan, as he was travelling from Aguacatlan to San Juan Ixcoy, "the channel of a little stream was pointed out to him, which the Mam Indians called *Xubanha*, implying *water that is whistled for;* because, by whistling at the openings of some clefts in a solid rock, water will immediately gush forth, of which there is no appearance unless that method be used to exhibit it." He speaks also of a subterranean river, that shews itself through a large aperture at the foot of a hill about two miles from the village of Chialchitan. At this spot, a large quantity of water "boils up," and forms at once a stream of considerable magnitude. Another river of moderate size falls into a deep pool, and disappears, near a place called *Rancho de las Minas;* it rises again on the opposite side of a ridge of mountains near the river Socoleo. From all these accounts, making due allowance for whatever inaccuracy or romance may have mingled itself with the facts, it is evident, that, in the heart of the mountains, there must exist a series of caverns and natural galleries, tra-

versed by subterranean rivers,—such as M. Humboldt conjectures to exist in the limestone formation in the neighbourhood of Tehuilotepec and Platanillo.* For the periodical circulation of the waters, it is not easy to account; but the whole region is full of wonders, and might seem the theatre chosen by the genii of the watery element to display their fantastic feats. The water volcano, the fathomless lake of Atitlan, the triennial rivers, the dripping rocks, and the numerous hot springs, all seem to form connected parts of the stupendous hydraulic machinery.

The agency of fire is doubtless at the same time concerned in some of these phenomena. Besides the volcano of Tajamulco already mentioned, in the neighbourhood of which is found so much sulphur, Juarros mentions another in the same province, called *Excanul*: this, however, may be the same under another name. A spring of tepid water highly sulphureous is found at *San Bartolome Aguas Calientes*, and several warm springs are found on the banks of the river Siguila near Suñil. The whole region abounds with salt and sulphur in different combinations, and may be compared to one vast laboratory, of which it might be said, that the volcanoes are so many colossal furnaces.

In the province of Quezaltenango, there still exist vestiges and foundations of many large Indian fortresses; among others, the celebrated one of Parraxquin (green mountain), on the confines of Totonicapan and Quezaltenango, and the citadel of Olintepec, "formed with all the intricacy of a labyrinth," which was the chief defence of the important city of Xelahuh.

*. Vol. i. p. 357.

Fortresses existed at Socoleo, Uspantlan, Chalcitan, (Chialchitan ?) and other places.

An interesting specimen of ancient art is incidentally referred to by Juarros, in the description of the city of Patinamit in the kingdom of Kachiquel, situated eleven leagues from the modern village of Tecpanguatemala.* In a deep ravine near that city was "a place of worship," wherein was placed "a black transparent stone," which, in some unexplained way, was consulted as an oracle, the priests affecting to discover on its surface a representation of the fate awarded to the criminal by the gods. This oracle was also consulted in the affairs of war. "The bishop, Francisco Marroquin, having obtained intelligence of this slab, ordered it to be cut square, and consecrated it for the top of the grand altar in the church of Tecpanguatemala. It is a piece of singular beauty, about half a yard each way." We may hope to receive before long, some more distinct account of this oracular stone. The description of the city of Patinamit, given by Fuentes, makes it appear to have been a stronger and more remarkable place than Utatlan itself. Though a little out of its place, we shall insert it here. Patinamit was seated on an eminence, the plane of which extends about three miles from north to south, and about two from east to west. The soil is covered with a stiff clay about three quarters of a yard deep. On one side of this area may be seen the remains of a magnificent building, perfectly square, each side measuring 100 paces. This fabric was constructed of hewn stone, extremely well put together. In front of the building is a large square, on one side of which stand the ruins of a

* See page 246.

sumptuous palace, and near to it there are the foundations of several houses. A trench, three yards deep, runs from north to south through the city, having a breast-work of masonry, rising about a yard high. On the eastern side of this trench stood the houses of the nobles, and on the opposite, the residences of the *maseguales*, or commoners. The streets were, as may still be seen, straight and spacious, crossing each other at right angles. To the westward of the city is a little mount, that commands it, on which stands a small, round building, about six feet in height, in the middle of which is a pedestal formed of a shining substance resembling glass; but the precise quality of it has not been ascertained. Seated around this building, the judges heard and decided causes; and here also their sentences were executed, after the oracular stone in the ravine below, had been consulted. A deep defile, or natural fosse, surrounded Patinamit, the perpendicular depth of which from the level of the city, was more than 100 fathoms. The only entrance to the city was by a narrow causeway, terminating at two gates, one beyond the other, constructed of the *chay* stone. The dimensions of these works are not given, but the gigantic nature of the fortress bears some analogy to that of Xochicalco in Mexico.* The

* See vol. i. p. 339. The hill of Xochicalco, which Humboldt describes as a mass of rocks to which the hand of man has given a regular conical form, is surrounded, in like manner, by a deep and very broad ditch: the whole entrenchment is above 12,000 feet in circumference. "The magnitude of these dimensions," adds the learned Traveller, "ought not to surprise us: on the ridge of the Cordilleras of Peru, and on heights almost equal to that of the Peak of Teneriffe, M. Bonpland and myself have seen monuments still more considerable. Lines of defence and entrenchments of extraordinary length, are found in the plains of Canada. The

city of Mixco in Xilotepec was, in like manner, built on the summit of a steep rock, accessible only by a narrow path that would not admit two persons abreast, and intersected by deep ravines. It is said to have been founded by the Pocomam Indians, and is about nine leagues from the modern town of Mixco. The Vale of Tenochtitlan is not richer in ancient monuments, than that of Guatimala and the adjacent provinces. Yet, Pompeii itself was not more effectually shrowded from observation, previously to its disinterment, than these regions have hitherto been from the eye of science or of taste, through the incurious spirit and jealous policy of the Spanish Americans.

The most remarkable object which this district presents to the naturalist, is "the bat-winged squirrel," found on the mountains and in the woods of Quezaltenango, Totonicapan, and Solola. Its figure and size, Juarros says, are those of the common squirrel, but it has two small wings resembling those of the bat, without hair or other covering: it can fly, however, but a short distance. In point of fact, we apprehend, it cannot be said to fly at all, but only to leap. Such at least is the account generally given by naturalists of the American flying squirrel. The supposed wing is only a loose skin attached to the bending of the hinder feet, and connected by a bony

whole of these American works resemble those which are daily discovered in the eastern part of Asia. Nations of the Mongol race, those especially that are most advanced in civilisation, have built walls that separate whole provinces·····Among the hieroglyphical ornaments of the pyramid of Xochicalco, we distinguish heads of crocodiles spouting water, and figures of men sitting cross-legged, according to the custom of several nations of Asia."—HUMBOLDT'S *Researches*, vol. i. pp. 109—11.

articulation with the fore feet, which the animal has the power of extending like a sail; and it then holds so much air as to buoy him up, and enable him to jump from tree to tree at a prodigious distance.

We must now proceed to give some account of the

PROVINCES ON THE ATLANTIC COAST.

To the south of the peninsula of Yucatan, between Chiapa and Totonicapan on the east, and the Bay of Honduras on the west, and bounded by Solola on the south, lies the province (*alcaldia-mayor*) of Vera Paz, called by the Indians Tuzulutlan. The Spaniards at first gave it the name of *Tierra de Guerra* (land of war), from the warlike spirit of the natives, by whom they were three several times repulsed in their attempts to conquer it. Charles the Fifth bestowed on it the name of Vera Paz, because the Indians embraced Christianity merely from the preaching of the missionaries. The account which Juarros gives of this prodigious phenomenon (for such it appeared to the armed apostles and crusading religionists of those times) is as follows: "In the year 1536, Bartolome Las Casas, Pedro de Angulo, Luis de Cancer, and Rodrigo de Ladrada, of the Dominican order, settled in the city of Guatimala. Las Casas, who was vicar of the convent, had, some years before, written a treatise, which he called 'De unico vocationis modo;' in which he attempted to prove, and with great erudition, that Divine Providence had instituted the preaching of the gospel as the only means of conversion to the Christian faith; for by those means alone can the understanding be persuaded, and the inclination be led, to embrace its tenets; consequently,

harassing by wars those whose conversion is sought for, is the means of preventing, rather than accomplishing, the desired object. Hence it results, that, to obtain this end, war cannot, in justice, be made upon those who have never been subject to a Christian authority, or have never committed any act of aggression against Christians. This reasoning was generally believed fallacious; and when the author promulgated and endeavoured to prove it from the pulpit, as well as in private assemblies, instead of producing conviction among his auditors, he was laughed at, treated with ridicule, and advised to put in practice what he had preached in theory; as he would then be with certainty undeceived by the bad success of his rash enterprise.

" Firm in his opinion, and possessing too much courage to be intimidated by taunts, Las Casas unhesitatingly accepted the proposal. The province of *Tuzulutlán*, which the Spaniards called *Tierra de Guerra* (the land of war), as they had been three several times driven back in their attempts to conquer it, but which the Emperor Charles the Fifth afterward called *Verapaz*, because the natives were brought within the pale of Christianity by the exertion of the missionaries only, was pitched upon by him as the scene of his first endeavours; and this region, that the Spaniards were unable to subdue by their arms, yielded to the mild persuasion of a few zealous ecclesiastics. The Dominicans, previously to commencing their undertaking, entered into an agreement with the governor, Alonzo de Maldonado, that such provinces as might be reduced to the obedience of the crown of Spain by their efforts, were not to be put under the charge of any individual; and that no

Spaniards should be permitted to reside in them during a period of five years. The governor assented to these terms, and signed an agreement of that purport on the 2d of May, 1537; which was confirmed by the king on the 17th of October, 1540, and again on the 1st of May, 1543.

"This arrangement being concluded, the Dominicans composed some hymns in the Quiché language; in which they described the creation of the world, the fall of Adam, the redemption of mankind, and the principal mysteries of the life, passion, and death of the Saviour. These were learned by some of the converted Indians, who traded with those of Sacapulas and Quiché, where the chief cacique of that country, who was afterwards called Don Juan, having heard them sung, asked those who had repeated them to explain more in detail the meaning of things so new to him. The Indians excused themselves from so doing, on account of their inability to perform it correctly, saying, they could be explained only by the fathers who had taught them; and these were so kind that, if he would send for them, they would gladly come and instruct him in every thing. The cacique was pleased with the information, and sent one of his brothers, with many presents, to entreat that they would come to make him acquainted with every thing contained in the songs of the Indian merchants. The fathers received this ambassador with great kindness, and much satisfaction to themselves, and determined that one of their number, Luis Cancer, should return with him to the cacique. The chief went to the entrance of the village to meet the missionary, treated him with great veneration, and after having been made to comprehend the mysteries of the new faith,

he fervently adopted it, burnt his idols, and became a preacher of the gospel to his own subjects.

"Cancer returned to Guatimala, and the favourable reports he made, so much rejoiced Las Casas and Angulo, that, in December 1537, they set out for the residence of the cacique Don Juan. They visited the whole district of *Tuzulutlán*, where they were well received; and having reconnoitred a part of it, they returned to the cacique Juan. At this time the fathers endeavoured to assemble the Indians in villages; for, as they were then living dispersed, there was greater labour in civilising and instructing them. With this object in view, they undertook to form villages; and, by the assistance of the chief, they soon succeeded, but not without much labour, and some opposition, in establishing the village of *Rabinal*. This object having been satisfactorily accomplished, they penetrated further into the province, and reached *Coban*, being every where well received by the natives.* Las Casas affirms, in his "Apologetical History," that in no part of the Indies did he find governments better ordered, or ruled by better laws, than those he met with in this district. Thus, the Indians of *Verapaz*, brought to live in societies under

* "It may at first sight appear inconsistent and contradictory to say that the missionaries arrived at *Coban* and other places, and afterward, that they persuaded the natives to live in villages; but it must be observed, that, in the time of their paganism, these Indians had villages similar to some still existing, that are called *Pajuyues*, in which the houses are so far distant from each other, that a place containing 500 inhabitants, will extend a league or more. These fathers, and some of the first conquerors, placed them in villages formed after the Spanish manner, with the church in the centre, before it the square, with the *cabildo* or town-house, prison, and other offices, the houses connected in squares, the streets straight and crossing each other at right angles."

a rational legislation, and instructed in the dogmas of true religion, embraced Christianity with ardour, and cheerfully submitted to the empire of the Spanish monarch. Such was the case, not only in *Rabinal* and *Coban*, but in places more remote, as *Cahabon*, and others.

"After the conquest of *Verapaz*, thus fortunately and mildly achieved, the Dominicans next undertook that of *Alcalá*. In the year 1552, Thomas de la Torre, vicar-general of the order, arrived at *Coban*, in his visit to the different convents. At this period, Domingo Vico had made himself master of the language of *Alcalá*, and accompanying the vicar-general, they made their first entry into that province; where they preached with so much zeal and fervour, that they induced many natives to embrace Christianity, and give up a great number of their idols, which were publicly burnt. They pursued their apostolical labours with diligence, converting and baptizing many; but, being repeatedly warned that some of the infidels meditated their destruction, they withdrew privately. Some time after this, Vico renewed his visit to *Alcalá*, and succeeded in making many proselytes. Being appointed prior of *Coban*, he sent Alonzo Vayllo, and some others, into *Alcalá*; and not long after, the conventuals of *Coban* went thither on a similar mission. The three years of Vico's priorate having expired, he made another excursion into that province, and exerted himself with unwearied zeal to persuade the inhabitants to form societies, and build villages; labouring incessantly to promote their welfare, until he fell a martyr to his kindness. He was killed by them on the 29th of November, 1555. Remesal makes no mention of *Alcalá* after Vico's death; and it is

supposed that further attempts to reclaim them were abandoned.

" Adjoining the province of *Verapaz* is that of *Manché*, the reduction of which was occasioned by the following circumstances.* About the year 1570, some of the principal Indians came to *Coban*, where they were well received, and much caressed by Thomas de Cardenas, Bishop of Verapaz, and other residents in the convent. This pleased them so highly, that afterward they frequently came to *Cahabon*, the nearest village to their own territories. On these visits, the fathers always instructed them on religious subjects, and exhorted them to embrace Christianity; the answer uniformly given was, that they would consider about it, but they remained undecided with respect to giving up their native mode of worship until 1603. In this year, a chapter of the Dominican order was held in the convent at *Sacapulas;* and Alonzo Criado de Castilla wrote to the members, recommending them most earnestly to undertake the conversion of *Manché.* The means by which this service was to be effected, were discussed in the assembly, with great attention, several times; and the result of these conferences was, to order Juan de Esguerra to prepare for undertaking the mission as speedily and effectually as possible. On the 25th of April, Esguerra, accompanied by Salvador Cipriano, left *Cahabon* for *Manché*, and reached the first village of that province on the 1st of May, which being St. Philip's day, they called it after the saint. The cacique advanced to meet them, and regaled them according to the manner of his country, with all the distinction he could shew; the principal

* This district, as well as Alcala, is now included in Vera Paz.

chiefs of the other villages that they visited, followed the cacique's example. The fathers preached to the Indians in all the places they visited; and having explored as much of the territory as they then could, returned to *Cahabon*. At the desire of the president, Esguerra persuaded some of the caciques to accompany him to Guatimala, where they were received by the governor, and treated with every mark of attention and kindness; he presented them with dresses of silk, and gave them others for their wives. This good treatment operated strongly in making the Indians lay aside the fear they entertained of the Spaniards, and led them to consider the offer of Christianity as liable to fewer objections than they had entertained against it. In February of the following year, 1604, the same missionaries undertook another journey into *Manché;* in May, they were followed by some more, and, in addition to these, care was taken to send some of the baptized Indians from *Cahabon* into the villages of *Manché*, that they might use their influence in exhorting the inhabitants to attend to the instructions of the fathers. These means were so successfully plied, that in 1606, eight villages had entirely abandoned the pagan rites, to kneel before the altars of Christianity, and submit to the government of Spain."

In 1764 and the following two years, the Dominican fathers made repeated attempts to convert the Indians of the Chol nation, whose country lies to the north-east of Vera Paz. Some of the Chols, it seems, had arrived at Guatimala, to request that missionaries might be sent to them, and the *audiencia* ordered Francisco Gallegos, the provincial of the order, to depute proper persons to undertake the mission. The provincial determined to go in person, attended by Father José Delgado. On arriving at Cahabon, the

last village in Vera Paz, they procured Indian guides, and, after a journey of twenty-three leagues, arrived at the dwellings of the Indians who had visited the capital. "At this place they assembled as many of the Chols as they could collect, and built a village which they named *San Lucas*, and soon afterward two others not far distant from the first. They subsequently penetrated into the *sierras* further to the north, and ascended a very lofty mountain, which was designated by the natives, the God of the Hills. On the other side of this mountain were great numbers of inhabitants, who immediately came to visit the fathers; and these having made them comprehend, that they had been sent by the Almighty for their instruction, were treated with great kindness and respect; the natives saying, that they appeared among them like the sun, moon, and stars, to dispel the darkness of their ignorance. The Indians then cleared a road for them to advance further into the country, and, as they arrived at any difficult or rough part, carefully carried them over it. In this manner they continued their route, and in the space of eight leagues, three more villages were marked out. The rainy season was now approaching, and the fathers returned to Guatimala.

"In 1676, the same zealous missionaries again visited the Chols and the Manchés, and encountered much less difficulty or fatigue than in either of their former journeys, as a more direct path had been opened for them. They found the Indians still persevering in their designs, and that they had not forgotten such instruction as had been already afforded to them: many more settlements were formed, in which 234 persons were admitted to the rite of Christian baptism, besides many others at the different dwellings and small settlements dispersed among the mountains.

In 1678, for what reason cannot now be discovered, the Chols returned to their native worship, abandoned the villages, blocked up the roads, dispersed among the mountains, and thus destroyed the expectations that had been raised at the expense of so much labour and fatigue."

No further attempts were made till the year 1685, when Augustin Cano, then provincial of San Domingo, penetrated once more into the mountains, and succeeded in persuading some of the Chols to return and settle again in the village of San Lucas; but, three years afterwards, these untoward neophytes again set fire to the village, and the missionaries resident there narrowly escaped with their lives. This want of success in the use of fair means, determined the Spanish Government to revert to the shorter method of conversion by means of the sword. In 1688, the *alcalde-mayor* of Vera Paz undertook an expedition into the country in search of the apostates, and brought back as many of the natives as he could induce to follow him, whom he settled in the valley of Urran, where their posterity still remain. The Spanish monarch now growing impatient, fresh commands were issued for the conversion of this nation; and in Nov. 1692, the Council of the Indies transmitted a despatch, ordering the conquest of the Chols and the Lacandons to be undertaken simultaneously from the provinces of Vera Paz, Chiapa, and Gueguetenango. The good work was not, however, set about till the beginning of 1695, when three detachments of Spaniards and Indians, under the command of the president of the audiencia, with a proper staff of ecclesiastics, entered the mountains. One of these detachments under Mazariegos, having advanced with great difficulty through swamps and thickets and over broken ground,

at length, on their sixth day's journey, discovered a village of the Lacandons, containing about 100 houses. It was quite deserted, but they determined to make a settlement here, and a wooden fort was hastily constructed, while the fathers who accompanied the troops, took possession of what had served for a temple, and, having burned all the idols they could find, converted it into a chapel. The track to the village having been discovered on Good Friday, the place was named, *Nuestra Señora de los Dolores*. Soldiers were now sent out in all directions in search of the fugitives, and about a hundred, with their cacique, were induced to return to their village; their houses were given up to them, and the soldiers were lodged in huts without the village. More Indians continued to arrive, until the number amounted to four hundred, most of whom were baptised. The rainy season being at hand, it was deemed expedient to return with the troops to the capital, leaving only a garrison in the fort, and some missionaries, to prosecute the work so favourably commenced.

A second detachment, commanded by a Captain Velasco, which left Cahabon about the same time that the former set out from San Mateo Iztapan, had in the mean time succeeded in collecting upwards of 500 Chol Indians, among whom were some of the fugitives who had run away from the villages established by Gallegos in 1675. "The domiciliated Chols soon gave information of the Mopans, a fierce and warlike tribe, spread over about thirty leagues of country, among whom neither Spaniards nor missionaries had ever yet ventured. The description given of this people, instead of discouraging the soldiers, excited their emulation, and they prepared to go in search of them. The commander having made the necessary

dispositions, they departed, and, with much labour, cleared their way over precipices, rocks, and ravines, until they came in sight of the hovels of the people they were in search of. The number of families in this nation, it is confidently stated, amounted to between 10 and 12,000, dwelling in a country of exquisite beauty and great fertility, in a climate the most agreeable of any that had yet been discovered. On the first sight of the Spaniards, the natives were alarmed, and gave unequivocal demonstrations of making a stout resistance; but the judicious measures of the missionaries, and the prudence of the commander, so much disarmed their resentment, and calmed their apprehensions, that they soon opened a friendly intercourse: the result of which was, that the caciques were brought together, and persuaded to exchange their present mode of life for a domestic one, and to accept the offer of being admitted to the benefits of Christianity. Intelligence of what had been effected, was sent to the governor at the village of Dolores, and also to the royal audiencia; submitting to their consideration, that advantages would accrue from building a town in Mopan, to be inhabited by Spaniards, as the land was of the excellent quality already mentioned, and the situation eligible for facilitating the reduction of the whole to settled habits of life; being in the centre of the unreclaimed nations, having Chol on the south, the Itza on the east and north, and the Lacandon on the west. The troops continued their march until they reached the extremity of Mopan, and pitched their camp about forty leagues from the lake of Itza, having traversed eighty-two leagues of very mountainous country. On quitting this situation, the detachment pursued a route to the river Chaxal, ten leagues distant from

Itza. Velasco thought of passing the river, and attempting the conquest of Peten; but the missionaries represented to him, that, as the numbers of the Itzaes were reported to be very great, their present force was inadequate to undertake so important an enterprise, more particularly as the soldiers began to be unhealthy, provisions to grow scarce, and the wet season was fast approaching. The commander acknowledged the force of these arguments, and determined to retreat; but, before leaving the territory of Mopan, a fort was constructed, and garrisoned by thirty soldiers, with some Indians, under the command of Pedro Ramirez de Orosco."

In 1696, another expedition was sent out under the direction of Bartolomé de Amezquita, *oidor* of the *audiencia*, accompanied by this same Velasco. They safely reached Mopan. Velasco then requested and obtained permission to push on with part of the troops at a quicker rate, but he was strictly enjoined not to penetrate more than six leagues beyond the river Chaxal. This command was not obeyed with the punctuality that became a soldier; he advanced as far as the lake Itza, where he was attacked by the Indians, and himself and all his men, about a hundred in number, were killed. Amezquita followed, and not meeting with Velasco, halted on the banks of the Chaxal, where he was proceeding to construct a fort, when, in consequence of a change of administration, and the new orders to which it led, the expedition was recalled, Mopan was abandoned, and all further attempts at conversion were suspended. The Itzaes were subsequently reduced by forces sent from Yucatan; but the Alcalas, the Mopans, the Chols, and the Lacandons remain, Juarros says, for the most part unsubdued to the present day. The province of Vera Paz

is, indeed, throughout inhabited almost entirely by Indians, there being neither Spaniards nor *Ladinos*, except a very few in one or two villages for the purpose of maintaining the sovereignty of the Spaniards over the territory.

San Domingo Coban, the residence of the *alcalde-mayor*, and formerly of the bishop of Vera Paz, is imposingly styled the imperial city of San Domingo. In point of population, it is a place of some importance, containing upwards of 12,000 inhabitants, but apparently in no other respect. It stands in lat. 15° 15′ N., long. 91° 16′ W., and is fifty leagues from Guatimala. The names of the other most populous villages are, *San Pablo*, *Rabinal*, *San Matteo*, *Salama*, and *Santa Maria Cahabon*. In the village of *San Augustin Lanquin*, there is a cavern wherein are very beautiful stalactites. The total population is about 80,000 souls.

The province of Vera Paz is partly mountainous and rugged, but contains extensive tracts of marshy land, subject to inundation from the innumerable rivers which intersect it. Some of these afford great facilities for inland navigation. By the river *Polochic*, produce imported from Europe might be transported to the capital. This river rises in the mountain of Xucaneb; after passing the village of *San Pablo Tamajun*, it takes a north-easterly direction, and at about four leagues from Tamajun, flows by another village, called *San Miguel Tucuru*. In its way to the Amatique gulf, it is joined by the Cahabon river. From the bar to this confluence, the river is ascended by large launches, vessels not being able to pass the bar at the mouth of the lagoon: beyond that point, large flat-bottomed canoes are employed. About eight leagues below Tucuru, there was formerly a

village called *Santa Catarina*, and, further down, another named *San Andres*, both of which were burnt, and the settlements destroyed, Juarros states, by the English. In former times, he says, the merchandise imported from Spain to Guatimala, and that which this country exported to Europe, were conveyed by this river; and even so lately as 1793, the organ sent from Europe for the church of San Domingo, was transported by this route to the capital. The advantages of the navigation are stated to be, first, that the Polochic has always sufficient water, even for vessels, if they could pass the bar; secondly, that the route from *Las Bodegas* (in Honduras) to the capital, is much shorter than that by Zacapa;* thirdly, that the former route is more healthy than the latter, and free from the excessive heats which prove so frequently fatal; and fourthly, that the lands of Vera Paz being fertile in the extreme, there is an abundant supply of provisions.

Another river of importance for inland traffic, is the *Rio de la Passion*, which rises in the mountains of Chama. Where it passes to the north of Coban, in front of the mountains of Chicec, it is twenty-five toises in breadth, and not less than ten in depth. In the rainy season, it swells to half a league in breadth, and its depth is proportionably augmented. From Vera Paz, it flows in a north-westerly direction, passes through the district of Peten, enters that of Tabasco, and, uniting with the large river Utsuma-

* From Guatimala to Ave Maria, the place of embarkation, about eleven leagues above Tucuru, the distance is fifty-five leagues, which may be travelled with ease in six days; from Ave Maria to the mouth of the Lagoon, two days; thence to the Castillo, at most two days more; so that the whole distance may be performed in ten days.

zinta, discharges itself into the Bay of Campeche, where it forms the bar of St. Peter and St. Paul.* A very profitable commerce, Juarros says, might be opened by means of this river, with Peten, Tabasco, Campeche, and even Vera Cruz.

The large lake Itza, or Peten, lies between Vera Paz, Chiapa, and Yucatan. It is of an oblong figure, and about twenty-six leagues in circumference. In some parts there are thirty fathoms of depth; in others, still more. The waters are good, and produce excellent fish. The Peten, or Great Island, is about two leagues from the shore. It was the chief place of the Itza Indians. It is steep and lofty, and on the summit is a plain nearly a quarter of a league in diameter. Four smaller islands lie at short distances from the principal one, all of which, together with the whole eastern side of the lake and the neighbouring range of mountains, were formerly peopled by different Indian nations. In the five islands alone, according to the computation of the missionaries, there were, prior to the conquest, from 24 to 25,000 inhabitants, while the Indians who inhabited the borders of the lake and the mountains, were almost innumerable. The gods were numerous in proportion. When Peten was taken by Martin de Ursua in 1697, "so great was the number of idols found in twenty-one places of worship that were in the island, as well as in the private houses, that the general, officers, and soldiers were unremittingly employed from nine

* In this account, our only guide is Juarros, and the map prefixed to the Translation by no means aids us to verify or throw light on the text. The Utsumazinta is apparently the same river that he elsewhere writes Zumacinta and Sumasinta. The river *San Pedro y Pablo* enters Tabasco from Chiapa. Neither the *Rio de la Passion*, nor the *Polochic*, is noticed by name in the map.

o'clock in the morning till five in the afternoon, in destroying them." * At the close of the last century, there remained but seven villages in the whole territory, with a population of only 2,555 individuals! The principal place in the district is the fortress of Peten, called *Nuestra Señora de los Remedios*, which is the residence of the warden (*castellano*) of Peten, and the ecclesiastical vicar appointed by the bishop of Merida. The climate, Juarros says, is temperate and salubrious; the country abounds with game; the soil yields two harvests of maize in the year; it produces also Chiapa pepper, Brazil wood, balsam, vanilla, cotton, cocoa, pine-apples and other fruits, indigo, achiote, and cochineal.

At the distance of ten leagues from the lake, the ridge of the Alabaster mountains begins, on which is found green, brown, and red jasper. These mountains afford shelter to great numbers of wild beasts. Among the animals peculiar to this province, Juarros mentions the *zachin*, a quadruped resembling a rat, about a span long, with a tail of six inches. Though so diminutive, it preys upon snakes, rats, birds, poultry, overtakes the mountain cat and deer, and even attacks the lord of the creation with great boldness; it emits so fetid a smell, that dogs will not encounter it unless they are much enraged, and its bite is venomous. Among the numerous varieties of the feathered race which enliven the forests of this province, the *quetzal* holds the first rank for its plumage, which is of an exquisite emerald green: the tail feathers, which are very long, are favourite orna-

* Among these idols were some bones, which were ascertained to be part of the skeleton of a horse left here by Cortes, on his way to Honduras, on account of its being diseased: the said bones were held by the Indians in high veneration.

ments with the natives, and were formerly sent, as a valuable present, to the sultans of Tenochtitlan. Great care was taken not to kill the birds, and they were released after being despoiled of these feathers. "The birds themselves," says Juarros, "as if they knew the high estimation their feathers are held in, build their nests with two openings, that, by entering at one, and quitting them by the other, their plumes may not be deranged." This most beautiful bird, which is peculiar to this kingdom, is found also in Quezaltenango. Three other birds found in this province are described by Juarros. "The *chion* is a small bird, about the size of a canary, and of various colours: some are of a fine shining black; others have the head and upper part black, the breast and inferior parts white, and the wings spotted; there are some yellow, like canaries, which they also resemble in song. This little creature cannot be domesticated, for they never survive two days of captivity. The *chulpilchoc* is a native bird of the cold and humid mountains of Verapaz; the plumage is black, except on the breast, which is scarlet; it is about the size of a canary, but has no song, at least only a sort of short whistle. The *raxon* is one of the most beautiful birds known; it is an inhabitant only of the mild climate of Verapaz, for great heat and excessive cold are alike destructive to it. Nature has denied it song, but, by fluttering its wings, it makes a noise like that of a hawk's bell; it is, therefore, only estimable for the plumage. Its height is about nine inches, the bill short, and eyes black; the feet are provided with three toes before and one behind; the feathers below the bill, and on all the front part, are purple; a ring round the neck, and the upper part of the body are of a lustrous emerald green, exquisitely beautiful; the

wings and tail are black. The female is larger than the male, but differs from him so much, as to seem a creature of a distinct species; the feathers are gray, with streaks of white, but in the sun's rays they have a tinge of green."

Excellent timber of various kinds,—the *guayacan*, the *drago*, which yields the gum called dragon's blood, the *liquidambar*, mastic-tree, and other balsamic and aromatic trees, abound in the forests.

To the south-east of the province of Vera Paz, lies the corregidorship of Chiquimula, bounded by Honduras on the east; Escuintla, Sacatepec, and Zonzonate on the south; and the Atlantic on the north. It is divided into two districts, which were formerly separate *corregimientos:* the one, called Acasaguastlan, or Zacapa, comprises the western part, and contains only eight villages; that of Chiquimula, the eastern division, includes twenty-two villages. The total population is about the same as that of Vera Paz, being rather above 80,000. The vernacular language is the Chorti. The climate is almost every where extremely hot. The productions of the soil are, maize, rice, cocoa, melons, water-melons, cotton, and above all, the sugar-cane; there are also said to be mines of gold, silver, talc, and other minerals. There are excellent pasture-lands, in which are bred cattle, hogs, horses, and mules.

The chief places in the western division are, *San Augustin de la Real Corona*, or *Acasaguastlan;* and *San Pedro Zacapa.* At the latter place, there are a few Spanish families, many of mulattoes, but more of Indians. In this district is the large fresh-water lake, called the *Golfo Dulce;* it is six leagues across in almost every direction, and communicates with the

ocean by a channel called the Gulf River, the mouth of which is about fourteen leagues from the lake, in the centre of the Bay of Honduras.* Numerous rivers fall into this lake, rendering it navigable by large vessels. For more than a century, this was the only port where the ships of Spain trading with this kingdom, discharged their freights. On its shore is a fort called the castle of San Felipé, built in 1655. In the event of our establishing a commercial intercourse direct with Guatimala, the river Dulce will become of considerable importance.

Chiquimula de la Sierra, the chief place in the eastern district, is the residence of the corregidor, and contains upwards of 3,000 inhabitants, of whom about 300 are Spaniards. It is in lat. 14° 20′ N., and long. 90° 16′ W.; distance from Guatimala, fifty leagues. But the best-built town in the district, though situated in a humid and unhealthy climate, is said to be *San Jago Esquipulas.* It stands in a plain surrounded by hills, and is famous on two accounts; first, as having one of the most capacious and handsomest churches in the kingdom; it has three aisles, and is surmounted by four lofty towers, but what forms its chief glory is, a large crucifix, carved by a native of Guatimala, which is adored throughout the country for the miracles it has wrought: the other remarkable thing is, *an inn*, — the only one, possibly, that Guatimala can yet boast of.

The province of Chiquimula was conquered by the officers of Alvarado. In the year 1530, the Indians revolted, but were again subdued by Hernando de Chaves. Part of this province and of Vera Paz, was

* According to Juarros, it is 120 leagues from Cape Catoche, and 68 leagues from the Point of Castile, and is in lat. 15° 25′ N.; long. 90° 16′ W.

formerly comprehended in the *alcaldia-mayor* of Amatique, which comprised a district thirty-five leagues in length by thirty in breadth, southward of the river Dulce. It contained one town and three villages; but the town, called New Seville, situated on the southern bank of the river Polochic, was dismantled in pursuance of a royal decree, in 1549, in consequence of representations made by the monks of Vera Paz. The three villages, Amatique, situated near the Gulf of Guanaxos, Jocolo, which stood where the castle of San Felipé has since been erected, and San Tomas, were abandoned in consequence of the pestilential epidemics by which they were repeatedly desolated; and the *alcaldia* was abolished.

Among the remarkable objects in this province, Juarros mentions the lake of Atescatempa, near a village of the same name, in the curacy of Jutiapa, which receives two large rivers, the Contipec and the Yupitepec, and, like the lake of Atitlan, has no apparent outlet for its waters; but, at a short distance from its borders, at a place called *La Doncella*, a large volume of water issues from the earth, and forms a broad and deep river. "As the discharge is always regular, this opening," Juarros reasonably infers, "can be no other than the channel by which the waters of the lake are drawn off." A still more extraordinary natural curiosity is, the cave of Peñol, which, according to the tradition of the country, extends through the mountains, from Peñol, towards the village of Mataquescuinte, as far as the *Rio de los Esclavos*, a distance of about eleven leagues. We know not on what grounds this tradition rests. The subterranean passage does not appear to have been penetrated beyond the distance of three quarters of a league. At this distance, the only individual who is known to

have attempted it, found his lights always extinguished by the mephitic vapour. Gigantic skeletons are said to have been found in the neighbourhood of this cave, some of the leg bones of which measured five feet six inches!! Among the rivers of this region, the next in importance to the river *Dulce*, is the *Rio Grande*, which rises in the province of Chimaltenango, and afterwards takes the name of *Motagua:* it is noted for a delicate species of fish, from two to three feet long, called the *bobo*, which is caught only in this river and in that which flows by the city of Comayagua. It falls into the Atlantic eight leagues to the eastward of the Gulf river, forming the boundary between Chiquimula and the intendancy of Comayagua, or Honduras.

The Bay of Honduras, along the coast of which the latter province extends, was so named by the Spaniards, because, when they first came to subjugate the country, they were unable to find anchorage, owing to the great depth (*hondura*) of water. They called the country *Hibueras*, or *Calabazas*, from the great number of pumpions they found on shore, and Guaimura, from a native village on the coast. The name of the bay is now generally given to the province, although it is officially named, as an intendancy, from Comayagua, the chief city. This province was the first part of the New Continent on which the Spaniards landed. Herrera says, that Columbus arrived off the coast of Honduras in the year 1502, and landed at Point Casinas on the 17th of August. Formal possession was taken of the country in the name of the King of Castile; Columbus, however, did not advance into the interior, but continued his progress along the coast till he reached Veraguas, and the province of

Honduras was not explored till twenty years after, when Gil Gonsalez Davila, taking shelter in the Gulf Dulce, built a little village near Cape Three Points, to which he gave the name of *San Gil de Buena Vista*. This site was subsequently abandoned as unhealthy, a character which attaches, unfortunately, to the whole province. We need not pursue the history of its settlement, which is in nowise interesting. The soil is for the most part extremely fertile, producing maize, pulse, cocoa, sugar, and cotton; it abounds also in cattle; but the climate is hot and humid, and, consequently, extremely insalubrious, on which account many of the towns of which it could boast at one time, have been successively abandoned. The population which, in 1778, was 87,730, and in 1791, 93,500, is still under 127,000. Yet it contains, Juarros says, more gold and silver mines than all the rest of the kingdom besides.* It is divided into two districts: Comayagua, formerly a government, which comprehends the western part; and Tegucigalpa, at one time an *alcaldia-mayor*, which extends over the eastern part.

The district of Comayagua contains ninety-four villages and settlements. The chief places are *Truxillo*, *Gracias a Dios*, and *Comayagua*. Truxillo, situated close to the port of that name, was formerly the capital of the province, and the residence of the bishop. It stands about thirty yards above the level of the sea, between the rivers Negro and Christales; distance from Comayagua 95 leagues, and 239 from Guatimala; in lat. 15° 20′ N.; long. 86° 6′ W. The harbour is

* The valley of Olancho, in particular, is celebrated for the "immense riches that have been collected from the river Guayape that flows through it; and even now," adds Juarros, "the purest gold in the kingdom is found in its sands."

commodious and well-fortified.' The Dutch landed here in 1643, and pillaged and destroyed the town; from which time it remained in a ruined state till 1789, when the Government directed it to be again put in a state of defence. It was attacked, in 1797, by two English ships of war and a brig, but they were repulsed. The population, however, is now very inconsiderable. Gracias a Dios is in a state of great decay; yet, it was formerly one of the most flourishing places in the kingdom, and important as being for some time the seat of the royal *audiencia*. It is situated in a pleasant valley, at the base of a lofty mountain, from the summit of which descends a rivulet that flows close by, and supplies it with water. It is thirty-eight leagues from Comayagua and 166 from Guatimala; lat. 14° N.; long. 89° 16′ W. This city was founded by Juan de Chaves in 1536. He had spent a long time in searching for a convenient situation for a town about mid-way between Honduras and Guatimala, that should facilitate the commerce with the capital, when, at length, on arriving at the level tract in which the town was afterwards built, the soldiers exclaimed, *Gracias a Dios*,—'Thank God, we have found a proper place!' and from this circumstance it received its name.* The town was indebted for the rapid increase of its prosperity, to the

* A similar circumstance gave rise to the name of Cape Gracias a Dios. "Columbus having arrived at Point Casinas in August 1502, kept a westerly course, contending with great difficulty against the wind and a strong current, until he weathered a headland stretching far into the sea, and from which the land trends away to the southward; he then kept his intended course with ease. The sailors thanked God for having doubled the cape, and it then received its appellation." There are many similar instances of places owing their names to an exclamation, as Olinda, Maranham, and Buenos Ayres.—See MOD. TRAV. *Brazil*, vol. ii. p. 306.

discovery of some gold mines in its vicinity, in 1544. The richest of these was that of *San Andres de Nueva Zaragoza*, situated in a mountain of the valley of Sensenti, to the west of the city, and east of the valley of Copan. Fuentes asserts that, with no other instrument than a wooden stake, poor people went to this mountain, and, by merely scratching up the sand, found grains of the precious metal. He says, also, that in a mine belonging to Bartolomé Marin de Sanabria, more than a pound of gold a day was collected by the labour of himself and one slave. "The strongest proof that can be adduced of the riches of this mountain," remarks Juarros, "was the appointment of an *alcalde-mayor*, for the purpose of superintending the working of the mines and receiving the king's fifths. This officer was invested with plenary jurisdiction, both in civil and criminal matters, within the boundaries of the mines, and had the power of compelling a fourth part of the Indians within a circuit of twelve leagues, to labour in them. These sources of wealth, that were so famous for more than a hundred years, are now entirely exhausted, and the alcaldia is extinguished. *Santa Maria de Comayagua* was founded in 1540, with a view to maintain an easier communication between the two oceans, its situation being about half-way between Puerto Caballos and the Bay of Fonseca. In 1544, a royal order directed, that the new *audiencia* of the confines of Guatimala and Nicaragua should reside in Comayagua, which was thenceforth to be called New Valladolid; but this decree was not carried into effect. In 1557, it was created a city; and in 1561, the see of Truxillo was transferred to it, at the solicitation of the bishop. It is now the residence of the intendant. It is situated in a beautiful plain contiguous to a large

river (the Ulua), which abounds with excellent fish; lat. 13° 50′ N., and long. 88° 46′ W.: the distance from Guatimala is 144 leagues. *San Pedro Zula*, founded by Alvarado in 1536, *San Jorge Olanchito*, founded by Diego de Alvarado in 1530, and *Sonaguera*, were formerly called cities, and had corporations, but are now entirely decayed. Of *San Gil de Buena Vista*, and *El Triunfo de la Cruz*, founded in 1523, as well as of the town of *San Juan*, near Puerto Caballos, settled in 1536, nothing remains but the name. *Yoro* is still a considerable town. The village of *Tencoa* is celebrated for a peculiar species of pepper cultivated in its vicinity; the valley of *Morolica* for its cheese; and that of *Copan* for its tobacco.

The district of Tegucigalpa contains two towns; the one from which it takes its name, and *Xeres de la Frontera*. The former is the most populous and flourishing place in the whole province, and is the residence of a deputy-intendant. It stands in a healthy climate, 25 leagues from Comayagua, and 148 from Guatimala. It contains a spacious church, two oratories, and two convents, Franciscan and Mercedarian. Xeres is situated in the valley of Cholu-teca, the most southerly and the hottest place of all the district, in lat. 12° 50′ N., and long. 87° 46′ W. Within its jurisdiction is *El Corpus*, which has produced more gold than any other place in the kingdom. This canton is in fact esteemed the richest in the precious metals of any in Guatimala.

On the coast of this province there are six different ports. The first is *Omoa*, a bay with good anchorage, forming a clean, safe, and well-sheltered harbour, sufficiently capacious to moor twenty or five and twenty vessels. It is 17 leagues east of the Fresh

Gulf, in lat. 15° 23′ N. and long. 88° 56′ W. Fort San Fernando Omoa was built in 1775, to protect the harbour. In 1780, however, the place was taken by the English, but they soon abandoned it on account of the unhealthiness of the climate. At a short distance from the fort is a village inhabited by negroes, who are the only persons able to endure the climate. Three leagues further eastward is *Puerto Caballos*, formed by two bays: as its entrance has little more than two feet water, it is not much frequented. *Puerto de Sal*, 37 leagues from the gulf, is very small, and without good anchorage. *Trionfo de la Cruz* is a large bay trending to the south-east, where vessels of any size may anchor under shelter of three small islands, called the Friars. The fifth port is that of *Truxillo*, 68 leagues from the Fresh Gulf, formed by Point Castilla on the N.E., and Point Quemara on the S.W., which are six leagues distant from each other: in the middle of the bay lies the *Isla Blanca*. The last is *Puerto Cartago*, 132 leagues from the Gulf River, in the territories of the uncivilised Indians. The principal rivers that fall into the Atlantic, are the *Camalecon*, navigable by *piraguas*, or large canoes, for more than fifty leagues, which falls into the sea twenty-four leagues below the Gulf River; the *Ulua*, 31 leagues from the same point; the *Lean*, or *Leones*, 46 leagues from the Gulf; the *Aguan*, 84 leagues E. of the Gulf River, and about 60 miles W. of Cape Camaron,—it is navigable by canoes about 40 leagues from its mouth. This is the boundary of Honduras and the territory of Taguzgalpa. Six leagues further is the *Limones*, which descends from the mountains of *Olancho el Viejo*. Twelve leagues further is the bar of the *Rio Tinto*, or Black River. Half a league to the eastward is the *Payas*, and

the last is the *Platanos*, which falls into the Atlantic about 106 leagues from the Gulf River.* The *Nacaome* and the *Choluteca* fall into the Bay of Conchagua on the south-western coast.

Eighteen leagues N.E. of Port Truxillo, the Island of Roatan lies off the coast, extending from forty-five to fifty miles in length, by from six to ten in breadth. The approach to it is dangerous, owing to the reefs and rocks by which it is surrounded; but the principal harbour affords good anchorage, though rather open to S.W. winds. In the year 1642, this island was taken by the English, but was abandoned eight years after. From that time to 1742, it remained uninhabited; the English then again occupied and fortified it, but were dislodged about 1780. They resumed possession of it in 1796; but, in the following year, the Spaniards once more recovered it.

The only object of interest known to exist in this large province, is the Great Circus of Copan, in the valley of that name, which, at the time that Fuentes wrote (about A.D. 1700), existed entire. It is described as "a circular space, surrounded by stone pyramids about six yards high, at the bases of which are figures, both male and female, *habited in the Castilian costume*, of very excellent sculpture, and coloured." In the middle of the area, a flight of steps led to the place of sacrifice. At a short distance is a stone gateway, on the pillars of which are sculptured figures, likewise in Spanish habits; and on entering

* We give these details on the authority of Juarros, as points to be verified, rather than as actually ascertained. In the map prefixed to the English translation, neither the *Limones*, the *Rio Tinto*, the *Payas*, nor the *Platanos*, appears under those names: the only three rivers eastward of the Aguan, and westward of Cape Gracias a Dios, are named the *Yangue*, or *Guayape*, the *Bayano*, and the *Barbo*.

this gateway, two fine stone pyramids present themselves, "from which is suspended a hammock containing two human figures, clothed in the Indian style. Astonishment is forcibly excited on viewing this structure, because, large as it is, there is no appearance of the component parts being joined together; and, although entirely of stone, and of an enormous weight, *it may be put in motion by the slightest impulse of the hand.* Not far from this hammock is the cave of Tibulca, which appears like a large temple hollowed out of the base of a hill, and adorned with columns having bases, pedestals, and capitals: at the sides are numerous windows faced with stone, exquisitely wrought." All this reads assuredly very much like romance, but, as it is part of our object, while recording the discoveries of former travellers, to point out what it remains for future travellers to investigate, we should have been guilty of a great omission had we failed to direct their attention to this valley of wonders, where the genii who attended on King Solomon have evidently been the artists.*

We now proceed to the description of a province which seems likely to become, in some respects, the most important in the kingdom, as affording

* The valley of Copan is situated on the boundary line between the provinces of Chiquimula and Comayagua. The Indian city of Copan was one of the largest and most populous in the kingdom. When the Spaniards arrived before it, it was so well prepared for defence, as to be able to hold out against a large and powerful army. On one side it was defended by the mountains of Chiquimula and Gracias a Dios; on the opposite side, by a deep fosse and an intrenchment, formed of strong beams of timber, having the interstices filled with earth, in which were made embrasures and loop-holes, through which the besieged discharged their arrows under cover from the enemy's fire. It was taken with difficulty by De Chaves. Its site is now entirely deserted.

the long-sought-for communication between the two oceans, —

THE INTENDANCY OF NICARAGUA.

This was the first province subdued by the Spaniards, having been discovered and partially settled by Gil Gonzales Davila and his companions in 1522. It takes its name from a powerful cacique (or perhaps from his territory), who was one of the first to enter into amicable relations with the Spaniards, and submit to baptism. It is bounded, on the north and north-east, by Honduras and Tologalpa; on the north-west, by Tegucigalpa; on the south-west and south, by the Pacific and Costa Rica; on the east, by the territory ceded to Colombia, which skirts the shores of the Atlantic. The intendancy includes five districts; that of Leon, formerly a distinct government, and the ancient corregidorships of Realejo, Subtiava, Matagalpa, and Nicoya. The latter are all very much reduced in importance: Realejo, Subtiava, and Nicoya, more especially, which lie along the shores of the Pacific, are, from the insalubrity of the climate, which is both hot and humid, almost depopulated. The first of these districts contains but three villages besides the town from which it takes its name, and (in 1778) a little more than 6,000 inhabitants: the last has only one settlement, and a scattered population scarcely amounting to half that number. The total population of the intendancy was, in 1778, 107,000: in 1823, it is computed to have reached 164,400. As the temperature of the whole province is very hot, it does not produce wheat, but yields excellent grapes and other fruits, cocoa, indigo, cotton, the gum called *carana*, and various medicinal drugs:

Immense herds of cattle are pastured in the large grazing-farms, for the consumption not merely of the province, but of the city of Guatimala also: the soil, however, is not favourable for breeding sheep.

But the most remarkable feature of this province is, its numerous rivers and immense lakes. The Lake of Nicaragua is the largest in the kingdom, and one of the most extensive in the world, being more than 150 leagues long from east to west, and nearly 60 miles from north to south; it has almost every where a depth of 10 fathoms, with a muddy bottom, except along the shore, where there is clear sand. A great number of rivers fall into this vast basin, but the River San Juan is, according to Juarros, the only visible outlet; notwithstanding which, he says, there is no observable indication at any time of any increase or decrease of its waters. On the north-west, it communicates with the Lake of Leon or Managua, which extends upwards of 50 miles in length by nearly 30 in breadth, by a navigable channel called the *Rio Tipitapa*, about 20 miles in length. This lake also is said to be throughout of sufficient depth to receive the largest ships. At twelve miles distance only from its northern extremity, runs the river Tosta, which, after a course of twenty miles, falls into the Pacific Ocean. To form, therefore, a communication between the two oceans, the only part actually to be opened, would be the twelve miles between the River Tosta and the Lake of Leon.

Humboldt says, there are in the archives of Madrid, several memoirs, both French and English, on the possibility of the junction of the Lake of Nicaragua with the Pacific; but in none which he had seen, was the height of the intervening ground sufficiently cleared up. Upon more recent information, however,

it has been ascertained that the difference of level in the highest part, is not more than fifty-one feet above the surface of the Lake of Leon, which is about three feet higher than that of the River Tosta. Not more than two locks, therefore, would be required to render this a perfectly practicable and secure communication.

This great achievement appears likely to be at length realised by the enterprise of British capitalists. Under the auspices of the local Government, an association has already been formed for the purpose of cutting a ship-canal in this direction, and a bill in relation to the subject is now in its progress through parliament. From the prospectus issued by the committee, we obtain the following additional details.

"That the line now spoken of was known to the Spanish Government, is put beyond doubt; but, as she would not, or could not, avail herself of this knowledge, she with cautious jealousy concealed it from other nations. It appears from documents discovered in the hydrographical cabinet of the Spanish minister of marine, that the most accurate surveys were made of the whole of central America, and were sent, accompanied with proper drawings, to Madrid. One of these, containing an exact description of the spot most favourable for opening the proposed channel, was obtained some time ago under particular circumstances, by a gentleman who resided at the court of Madrid, and it is now in possession of the company. From this it appears, that, in the Province of Nicaragua, in 10° 10′ N. lat., and 32° 15′ W. long., the River San Juan falls into the Atlantic Ocean, after running a south-east course of 120 miles from the lake Nicaragua, in which it has its source. This river, in the rainy season, is navigable from the sea to the lake for

ships of from 200 to 300 tons burthen; but it may be rendered navigable for the largest vessels, and sufficient depth of water be preserved for them the whole of the way up. The passage is at present partially obstructed by certain ships sunk by the Spaniards, to prevent the intrusion of foreign vessels."

Then, after describing the above-mentioned plan of communication by means of the River Tosta, the document proceeds: "Another line of communication with the Pacific, presents itself also from the Lake of Leon. On the southern shores of that lake, is situated the town of Tipitapa. From this town, a canal might be cut into another river, San Juan, which runs into the Pacific by the port of that name, in the Gulf of Papagayo. The distance between the lake and where the cut would enter the River San Juan, is about twelve miles, and the whole distance to the Pacific is not more than thirty. Of this distance, eighteen miles of the river are already navigable for large vessels.

"To point out all the advantages of such a junction of the two great oceans, would be impossible in the limits of a prospectus. They would be as various as the many branches of profitable trade which would be so greatly facilitated, or to which they would give rise. The intercourse of Europe and America with the States on the shores of the Pacific, would be enlarged to an incalculable extent; the South Sea Trade, the Whale Fisheries of England and America, the facilities for working the mines in the central Provinces, in Chili, and Peru, would be increased in an extraordinary degree; the India Trade would likewise be materially increased, and the voyage to China and the Philippine Islands shortened by some thousands of miles. THE WHOLE OF THESE TRADES WOULD

BE CARRIED ON THROUGH THE NEW CHANNEL. The advantages which would accrue to England, in a political point of view, cannot be overlooked: they would be of a most important nature, but it is unnecessary to mention them in detail.

" It may, perhaps, be objected, that some accounts of the River San Juan have represented it as not navigable for ships of any great size. It is admitted, that some maps and charts of South America have so described it; but nothing is more clearly demonstrated than the fallacy of such representations. It is a well-known fact that the Spaniards prohibited the navigation of the San Juan, under pain of death, sunk vessels in different parts of the river, and also raised a fort for its prevention. *It is also well known, that Spain has often wilfully misdescribed the nature of some of her South American colonies, to prevent the intrusion of other nations; and only since the establishment of the independence of those countries, could foreigners land on their shores.* An instance of this kind was experienced not very long ago by Lord Cochrane. While at the mouth of the river Guayaquil with part of his fleet, he was boarded by a pilot, who assured him that the river was not navigable for large vessels. His lordship, on referring to his maps and charts of this part of the coast, found this river described as full of difficulties and dangers, and absolutely unnavigable for large ships. It was similarly represented by more than one English, as well as Spanish geographer. His lordship inquired what water there was in the river, and was informed that the depth was four fathoms. He instantly ordered the pilot to conduct him up, on pain of immediate death. The terrified pilot obeyed, and in a short time his lordship cast anchor abreast of the town of Guayaquil, with his

squadron, to the astonishment of the inhabitants, who saw, for the first time, the guns of a fifty-gun frigate bearing upon their city. The question is, however, now set at rest for ever; the information derived from the survey spoken of, leaving no more doubt that the San Juan may be easily rendered navigable, (and for ships of all burdens,) than there exists of the navigation of the Thames.

"The gentleman by whose skill and address a copy of the survey was obtained, is one on whom the Company can place the most implicit reliance. They have availed themselves of his great abilities, and he is now on his way to central America, to take the preliminary steps for carrying this important undertaking into effect. From the estimates which have been made, it is calculated, that the profits accruing to the company from the tolls of ships passing and repassing, will be sufficient, *after defraying all expenses, to replace, in the course of ten years, the original capital, besides giving in the interim a considerable dividend.*

"Independently of the many other advantages which she must derive from it, England will have the glory of achieving a work, which has been eagerly desired ever since America was discovered, and even more so since its value to Europe has been correctly ascertained. In effecting this, she will leave to posterity an additional monument of her great commercial enterprise, her industry, and perseverance."

It would be altogether idle for us to offer any comment on this statement, as we cannot be expected to have access to more minute or recent information than the committee have been enabled to procure. Humboldt states, that the coast of Nicaragua is almost inaccessible in the months of August, September, and October, on account of the terrible storms and rains,

and, in January and February, on account of the furious north-east and east-north-east winds called *papagayos*. This circumstance, he remarks, is exceedingly inconvenient for navigation. But the same inconvenience attaches, more or less, to the whole of the western coast of central America. The port of Tehuantepec gives its name to the hurricanes which blow from the north-west, and which deter vessels from landing at the small ports of Sabinas and Ventosa. The Tehuantepec cut, moreover, if carried into execution, would not afford a passage to any but barges or canoes; and this would be the case also with the projected communication by means of the River Chagres, and a canal to be cut from the *venta de Cruces* to Panama. Merchandise could be transported across the isthmus of Darien only in flat-bottomed boats, unable to keep the sea, and there would require to be *entrepôts* at Panama and Porto Bello. There is, apparently, no room for doubt, that the line of communication by the great lakes is by far the most feasible and advantageous. And, if completely realised, the distances to India and China would be shortened more than 10,000 miles!*

The lake of Nicaragua is rendered extremely pic-

* The vulgar notion of a difference between the level of the two oceans so material as to effect the practicability of the measure, is shewn by Humboldt to be without foundation. In America, the South Sea is generally supposed to be higher at the isthmus of Panama, than the Atlantic. Yet, remarks the learned Traveller, "when we consider the effect of the current of rotation," or gulf-stream, "which carries the waters from east to west, and accumulates them towards the coast of Costa Rica and Veragua, we are tempted to suppose, contrary to the received opinion, that the Atlantic is a little higher than the Pacific." By barometrical measurements, however, he ascertained, that if there be any difference of level between the two seas, it cannot exceed twenty or twenty-two feet.—*Pol. Essay*, vol. i. p. 31.

turesque by the numerous small islands which stud its surface. These are all uncultivated and uninhabited, except that of Omotepetl, from which a lofty mountain shoots up its volcanic peak near the southern shore of the lake, frequently emitting both flames and smoke: this island is inhabited, as it is remarkable that the neighbourhood of a volcano never fails to be. The lake is subject to tempestuous agitations, from heavy gales. Lakes, rivers, and creeks, and both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, furnish an inexhaustible supply of various kinds of fish. Extensive forests, affording valuable timber, and peopled with numerous tribes of monkeys, quadrupeds, and rare birds, skirt the shores of this little Mediterranean, and on its banks are found some of the most populous villages in the province. The principal place is the city of Granada, from which the lake takes the name more commonly applied to it in Guatimala, where it is called the lake of Granada. This city was founded in 1523. It stands on the north-western shore, in an advantageous position for commerce; lat. 11° 30′ N., long. 86° 21′ W.; distance from Leon 30 leagues, and 216 from Guatimala. It contains a handsome church and four convents: the Franciscan is one of the most ancient in the kingdom. The population, in 1778, consisted of 863 Spaniards and Creoles, 910 Mestizoes, 4,765 Ladinos, and, in an adjoining *barrio* or village, about 1,700 Indians.

The place which carries on the largest trade, however, in the whole intendancy, Juarros says, is Masaya, a large village containing a population of 6,000 souls, among whom are a few Spaniards. Yet, the situation, one would have imagined, is one of the last that would have been voluntarily selected. In the first place, the scarcity of water is severely felt,

and the inhabitants are forced to draw their only supply from a well of extraordinary depth. The descent into it is almost perpendicular, but the Indian women sling their pitchers behind them, and descend by placing their hands and feet in cavities scooped out in the rocky sides, with an incredible celerity. Then, at a short distance from the village, is the volcano of Masaya,—now, indeed, extinct, but, at the time of the conquest, known by the name of the *Infierno de Masaya:* the light of the lava constantly boiling up in the crater, might be perceived at sea twenty-five leagues off. Not far from this is another volcano, called *Nindiri*, from which an eruption took place in 1775, when "the torrent of lava that rolled into the lake of Masaya, destroyed the fish, and heated the lands which it traversed to so great a degree, that all the cattle feeding on them perished." *

The city of Leon, the capital of the intendancy, and the see of a bishop, is situated in a savanna, about eight leagues from the western shore of the lake to which it gives name, and four leagues from the shores of the Pacific; lat. 12° 20′ N., long. 86° 16′ W., and 183 leagues from Guatimala. It was originally founded in 1523, on the spot now called Old Leon, but was rebuilt on its present site a few years after. It contains four churches, three convents, Franciscan, Mercedarian, and of San Juan de Dios, a Tridentine college with eight professorships, a custom-house, tobacco-factory, post-office, royal treasury, &c., and a population of between 7 and 8,000 persons, including upwards of 1,000 Spaniards. The Cortes (of Cadiz), by a decree of Jan. 1812, granted permission

* Near the city of Nicaragua is said to be another volcano, which Humboldt calls *Momantobo*, but Juarros does not mention it.

to the city of Leon to erect a university, with the same privileges as those enjoyed by the other universities of Spanish America. By another decree emanating from the same authority, in the same year, the province of Nicaragua was privileged to hold a provincial assembly composed of deputies from the districts of Leon, Granada, Segovia, Nicaragua, Matagalpa, Nicoya, and Costa Rica, which assembly was installed in Oct. 1813.*

Four leagues to the north-west of Leon, on the shores of the Pacific, is the town of Realejo, inhabited entirely by Ladinos, who are employed in ship-building. The town was built in 1534, by the companions of Alvarado in his expedition to Peru, who, observing the advantageous situation of the harbour, determined to establish themselves on a spot so convenient and promising. Its original name was *Jaguei*, or *Cardon*, and it is said to have received the diminutive appellation of Realejo from the small number of settlers. The harbour is formed, like that of Guayaquil, by a large and beautiful river. "There is, perhaps," says Juarros, "not a better harbour in the Spanish monarchy, and there are very few in the known world superior to it. In the first place, it is capable of containing 1,000 vessels commodiously, affording clean and good anchorage in every part; and ships may lie close to the shore without the smallest risk or danger; there is not the most trifling impediment to the passage in or out, and new vessels may be launched at all seasons without the least obstruction. The conveniences for ship-building cannot be surpassed, as timber, cordage, sail-cloth, pitch, and tar, may be procured in great abundance; the supply of masts

* Juarros, p. 338.

is inexhaustible. This branch of commerce might be most advantageously carried on: in fact, a great number of vessels of all sizes were formerly constructed here, and were held in such high estimation, that Fuentes mentions, that a galleon built in Realejo was sold at Callao for 100,000 dollars. The harbour could be placed in a respectable state of defence with the greatest ease, as a few pieces of cannon mounted in battery on the islet of Cardon would, from its eminence, completely command the entrance, and effectually protect the port. There was formerly a different channel into the harbour from the one now used. Originally, the passage was between the point of the Isle of Cardon and the peninsula of Castañon, and ships proceeded up the river to the landing-place at a village called Nuestra Señora del Viejo; but the fall of immense quantities of rock, both from the Isle of Cardon and the point of Castañon, during a violent earthquake, has made this passage impracticable. The present channel lies between the north point of Cardon and the isle of Icacos, whence vessels have a clear course, and may run up with their bowsprits almost into the town." At a short distance is the village of the *Viejo*, where the corregidors have resided, on account of its more healthy situation: it contains upwards of 3,000 inhabitants, and is, moreover, resorted to on certain holydays by devout pilgrims from all parts, on account of an inestimable *bijou*, — an image of *Nuestra Señora*, which was once the property of the immaculate virgin Santa Theresa!

The whole of this tract of coast is low. That of Nicoya, in the south-eastern extremity of the province, is covered at full tide. The road from Realejo to Leon, passes for twenty miles across a flat country,

covered with mangle-trees.* The only other places of any consideration in the intendancy are, *Segovia Nueva*, situated on the River Yare, near the confines of Tegucigalpa, 30 leagues north of Granada; *Nicaragua*, 12 leagues S.E. of Granada, inhabited chiefly by Spaniards, who carry on a traffic in cocoa, with an Indian village adjoining; *Esteli; Acoyapa; Villa Nueva;* (all these are in the district of Leon;) *Subiava*, a very populous Indian village, contiguous to the city of Leon; and *Nicoya.*

Of the numerous rivers which water this province, Juarros enumerates, as the most important, the Creek *del Viejo* (or Realejo River), the River of Nicaragua,† the Alvarado, and the Nicoya, among those which fall into the Pacific; and the Pontasma,‡ the Mosquito, the Gold River, the Iron River, and the great River San Juan, which discharge their waters into the Atlantic. The Nicoya separates this province from that of

COSTA RICA.

"A NAME," remarks Juarros, "which at present seems continued to it only in irony, as it is more poor

* Dampier cited by Humboldt.

† This is called, in the map, the *Rio de Partido*, and it is represented as communicating, by one of its branches, with the lake, while the other falls into the Gulf of Papagayo. If so, there would already be a water communication between the two oceans. But this branch has dissappeared in more recent maps, and is supposed to be an error. In fact, it is in contradiction to Juarros's own statement, that the lake of Nicaragua has no outlet but the San Juan.

‡ This is called, in the map, the River Yare, or Segovia. It rises in the jurisdiction of that city, and being joined by several tributaries, becomes a stream of considerable magnitude by the time it reaches the Atlantic, where it forms a small harbour near the false Cape Gracias a Dios.

and destitute than any other." The name of *rich coast* was given to it, however, on account of the rich mines which it contains, of gold, silver, and copper. "From the mine called *Tisingal*," Alcedo says, "not less riches have been extracted than from that of Potosi in Peru." At the period, too, that Porto Bello was the rendezvous of the galleons, the commerce of the province was in a most flourishing state. The whole of it was well-peopled, the arable lands were in a good state of cultivation, and the pastures were covered with cattle, horses, and mules, in which a considerable trade was carried on with Carthagena and Porto Bello from the harbour of Matina, and with Panama and other ports of the Pacific from La Caldera. Its prosperity and riches soon excited the cupidity of adventurers. In 1666, a descent was made on the coast by some pirates, whose numbers amounted to 1,200 men; but they were defeated and driven back by the Spaniards and their celestial allies, headed by the Virgin in person, whose image continued to be honoured by an annual procession in acknowledgement of the victory, up to the beginning of the present century. A few years afterwards, the pirates of the Pacific, on two several occasions, attacked the city of Esparza, plundered it, and set it on fire. So completely was it ruined, that the inhabitants abandoned it. On the coasts of the Atlantic, many attempts were made with various success by the Buccaneers; and the Mosco Indians made frequent incursions by the harbour of Matina, carrying off cocoa, slaves, or whatever else they could lay their hands on. These incessant and harassing hostilities appear to have led, in connexion with other circumstances, to the present depopulated and neglected state of the province.

"Whatever might once have been its importance," says Juarros, "it is very certain that, at the present time, its condition is very deplorable: the population is reduced almost to nothing, commerce is annihilated, and the mines are no longer worked. In fact, a province that, in many respects, merits particular attention, is now so much neglected, that none of the writers of this kingdom, or foreigners, take any notice of it. It extends from the *Rio del Salto*,* which separates it from Nicaragua, to the district of Chiriqui, in the jurisdiction of Veraguas, a distance of 160 leagues from west to east; and from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, from north to south, about 60 leagues. Its limit, on the Atlantic, is from the mouth of the River San Juan to the little island called the Escudo de Veraguas; and on the Pacific, from the River Alvarado, the boundary of the province of Nicaragua, to the River Boruca, which terminates the kingdom of Terra Firma to the westward. The climate is for the most part warm, but in some places it is very temperate; the soil yields cocoa, tobacco, and other productions of warm climates; wheat, and such other articles as are peculiar to colder regions, are raised in the mountainous parts; but all in scanty proportions from the want of hands for agricultural employments. There are mines of gold, silver, and copper, but they are scarcely more productive than the surface of the soil is. On the Pacific there is a harbour, that of Caldera, or Esparza; and another on the Atlantic, Matina, or the bar of Carpintero, formed by the rivers Barbilla and Chirripo, which unite four leagues above the sea.

* We presume that this is the same river as the Nicoya, which is just before stated to be the boundary.

The rivers Ximenes, Rebentazon, and Moin, discharge themselves into the Atlantic; they have sufficient depth of water to admit the piraguas eight or ten leagues inland. The Alvarado, the Rio Grande, and the Boruca, with several others of less note, descend into the Pacific. Within the government of Costa Rica there are 1 city, 3 towns, and 10 villages, containing together about 30,000 inhabitants, — a small proportion, compared with the territorial extent of it, and a great diminution of its ancient numbers. In the early periods of the Spanish occupancy, there were a governor and four corregidors, who had their residences in Quipo, Chirripo, Ujarraz, and the four villages contiguous to Cartago: the jurisdiction of the first extended to the coast of the South Sea, that of the second to the Atlantic, and the two others were intermediate. These corregimientos were abolished more than a century ago, and of many of the villages belonging to them, there are no vestiges remaining."

Since the time that this was written, some improvement has probably taken place in the state of things, as the present amount of the population of Costa Rica is computed to be nearly 38,000, although we know not whether the calculation rests on any certain data. The chief city, said to be the most ancient in the kingdom, is *Cartago*, situated in the heart of the province, 80 leagues from the boundary of Nicaragua, the same distance from Terra Firma, 30 leagues from Esparza, about as many from Matina, and 400 leagues E.S.E. from Guatimala; it is in lat. 9° 10′, and long. 82° 46′ W. It stands in a healthy situation, and enjoys a benignant climate; contains a church, a Franciscan convent, a sanctuary, and two oratories; and has a population of upwards of 8,000 persons, viz. 600 Spaniards, 6,000 Mestizoes, and

1,700 Ladinos. Next to the capital, the most populous town is *Villa Nueva de San José*, situated in a valley at a short distance from Cartago: it contains a population very nearly equal in numbers, with three times as large a proportion of Spaniards. *Villa Vieja* has 6,660 inhabitants, of whom 1,800 are Spaniards, and 4,000 Mestizoes: *Villa Hermosa*, included in the same curacy, has a population of 4,000 persons. *Ujarraz* is now a place of very trifling consequence. *Esperaza*, and the neighbouring town of *Bagases*, are entirely abandoned.

Should the "Atlantic and Pacific Company" succeed in completing their undertaking, this important province will no doubt reap essential advantages from the impulse which will be communicated to commerce and every internal improvement. It is one object which the Company have in view, to enter into contracts for working the valuable mines with which these regions are ascertained to abound. Yet, till now, who had ever heard of the mines of Guatimala? In Humboldt's general table of the annual produce of the mines, &c. of Spanish America, against Guatimala is written, "Nothing."* The total value of goods imported from the Old Continent into this kingdom, is stated at only two millions of piasters, while the imports of New Spain are estimated at twenty millions, and those of Cuba and Porto Rico at eleven millions! In the captaincy-general of Guatimala, as well as those of Caraccas, Chile, and Cuba, the whole receipts of the treasury were consumed by the expenses of administration, so that the mother country actually derived no net revenue from those colonies.*

But the system which so long condemned these

* Pol. Essay, vol. iv. p. 322.

fine countries to remain stationary in civilisation, and morally as well as politically unproductive, exists no longer: the sovereignty of Spain in that hemisphere has received its last blow from the hands of Bolivar. In the recent message of the Vice-President of Colombia to the Congress of 1825, assembled at Bogota, it is noticed, that "the provinces of Guatimala continue to preserve unmolested the sovereignty into which they spontaneously elected themselves. An accredited minister from that Government to the Republic is now," it is added, "residing in our capital." The message proceeds to advert to the necessity of adjusting and establishing the still undetermined limits between Colombia and Guatimala, "inasmuch as certain foreigners have pretended to a right to the coast of Mosquito, and as the interior boundary line between the two countries is not ascertained." "The Executive, (it is added,) in strict compliance with the law of the 12th of July, 1821, has declared that that part of the Atlantic coast which extends from Cape Gracias a Dios to the River Chagres, belongs to the Republic, and that all colonisation made therein without the sanction of the government and laws of Colombia, is null and void." Should this line of coast, however, be definitely annexed to Colombia, it will of course place under the control of that republic the navigation of the River San Juan, and consequently of the lakes and the intended ship-canal. It will amount, in fact, to little short of a cession of the whole of Costa Rica, and the greater part of Nicaragua.

* Pol. Essay, vol. iv. p. 204.

To revert to the subject of mines. The produce of those of Mexico, when Humboldt wrote his Political Essay, had tripled in fifty-two years, and sextupled in a hundred years; * and it will admit, he remarks, of greater increase as the country shall become more populous, and industry and information become more diffused. Sir William Adams, in a recent pamphlet on the Actual State of the Mexican Mines, maintains that the Anglo-Mexican Associations may reasonably expect to raise *treble* the quantity of ore formerly obtained, by working them scientifically, and by the aid of machinery. The expenses of working them, no doubt, admit of being reduced to a great degree. By the very imperfect process of amalgamation hitherto adopted, the loss in mercury alone is stated to have amounted to an eighth or even a sixth of the produce. At Freiberg, Humboldt says, they employ from 60 to 150 times less time in extracting the *silver*, than in the Spanish colonies, and consume in amalgamation

* The quantity of gold and silver imported into Europe from America between the years 1492 and 1803, is calculated to amount to 1,166,775,322*l.* sterling. Till 1525, Europe had received from the New World little else than gold. From that period till the discovery of the mines of Brazil, towards the end of the seventeenth century, the silver imported exceeded the importation of gold in the proportion of 60 or 65 to 1. In the first half of the eighteenth century, the mines of Brazil, Chili, Choco, &c., furnished so considerable a quantity of gold, that the proportion was scarcely 30 to 1. During the latter half of the last century, the silver again increased in the market; the annual produce of the mines of Mexico rose from 600,000 marcs to 2,500,000; and, as the produce of gold did not increase in the same proportion, the quantity imported of the two precious metals was as 1 to 40. The mines of Mexico have counterbalanced the effects which the abundance of the gold of Brazil would have produced. The East Indies and China are the countries which have absorbed the greater part of the gold and silver extracted from the mines of America.

eight times less mercury. It has been experimentally ascertained, Sir W. Adams says, that the Mexican ores admit of being most beneficially reduced by the same processes that are employed for the reduction of the tin ores in Cornwall. Mr. Moyle, an experienced mining engineer, who has been sent out to Mexico by the Anglo-Mexican Mining Association, reports that, "should it be found advisable to employ the process of amalgamation, (in consequence either of a scarcity of fuel, or from some species of the ores requiring to be amalgamated with quicksilver, in order to extract all the silver,)—this process, which costs the Mexicans the labour of from two to five months, may be better effected in *six hours;* while Mr. Perkins has discovered a method of separating the two metals with scarcely *any loss* of quicksilver."

Should these calculations prove accurate, the favourable opinion lately expressed by Baron Humboldt is likely to be verified; that the mining operations about to be undertaken by British capitalists could not fail to be the most important and lucrative undertaking that had yet been entered into. But it may possibly occur to the reader to inquire, whether the interests of society would not be placed in jeopardy by the rapid increase of the quantity of specie which may thus be anticipated,—whether a depreciation of the precious metals must not ensue, which will occasion a relative rise in the value of all other commodities, and materially affect all existing contracts. The learned Traveller above named, maintains that the danger is not so great as it appears on a first view, because the quantity of commodities which enter into commerce, increases with the augmentation of the currency which represents them. "The price of grain, it is true," he says, "has tripled since the

treasures of the New Continent were poured into the Old. This rise, which was not felt till the middle of the sixteenth century, took place suddenly between 1570 and 1595, when the silver of Mexico began to flow through all parts of Europe. But, between that memorable period in the history of commerce and the year 1636, the discovery of the mines of America produced its whole effect on the reduction of the value of money. The price of grain has not in reality risen to the present day; and if the contrary has been advanced by several authors, it is from their having confounded the nominal value of coin with the true proportion between money and commodities." It would be foreign from our object to pursue this inquiry, which is, however, a most important one. The first effect which might be expected to ensue from the present undertakings, is, the depreciation of silver relative to gold, unless the mines of Brazil shall, under the same improved management, be made to furnish a correspondent produce. But such depreciation is, perhaps, more likely to affect the profits of the miner, than to produce any material effect on the currency.

END OF GUATIMALA.

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